

BACK TO SCHOOL ISSUE

Ampermand

BRUCE McBROOM

VOL. VI NO. 1 OCTOBER 1982

Eddie Murphy Is Hot

also:

**AIRPLANE'S
ROBERT**

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ST**

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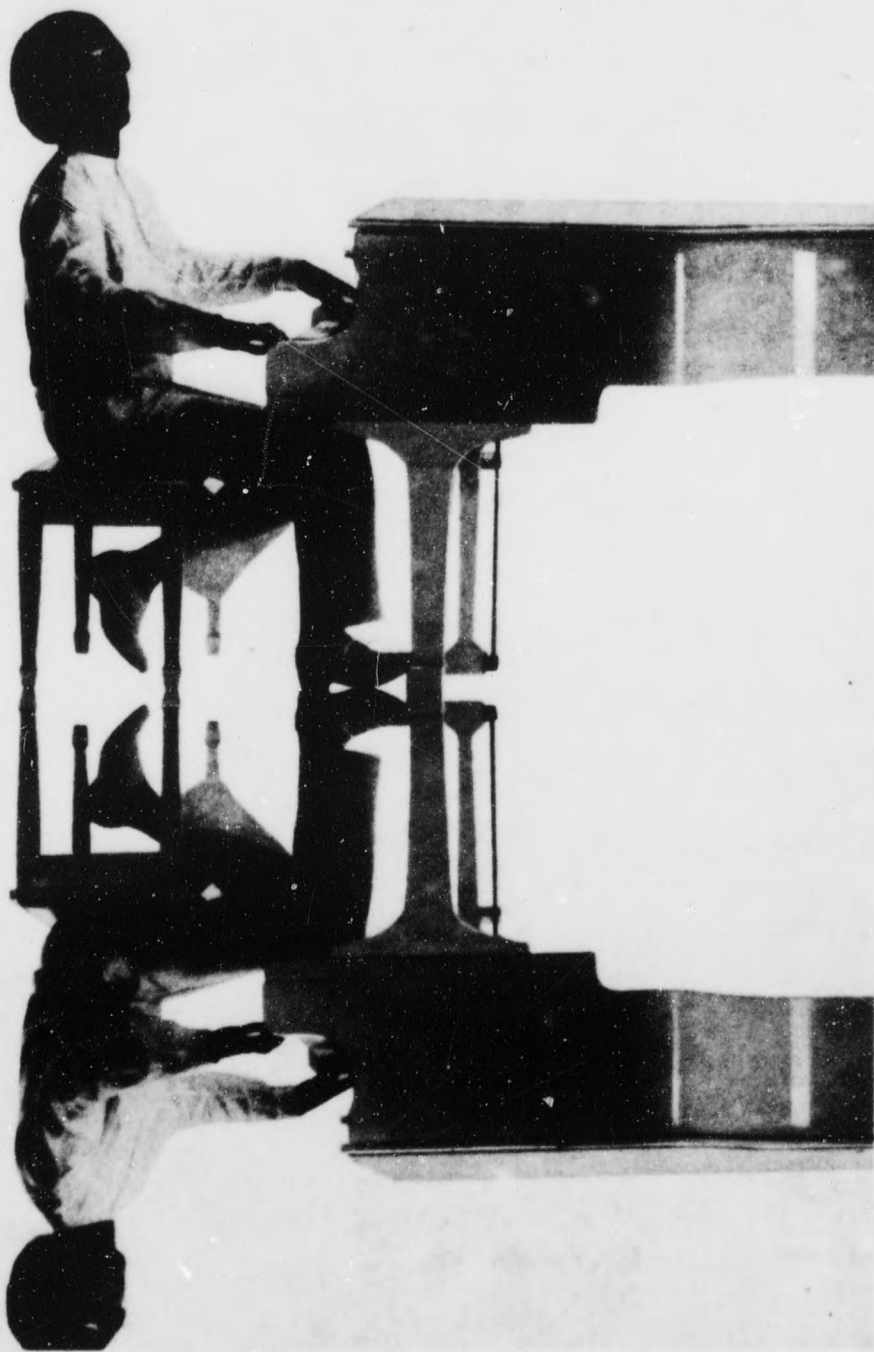
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TDK
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Ampersand

features

JOHN KEEBLE • 11

Northwest author & reluctant celebrity

ROBERT HAYS • 16

Airplane's pilot (dare we say it?) flies high

PAUL BARTEL'S EATING RAOUL • 18

Off beat underground filmmaker & his newest bizarre flick

EDDIE MURPHY • 20

From TV to records to major movie in one short swoop

MARSHALL CRENSHAW • 24

Modest rocker loves singles, makes good ones

**OUR ROYAL TREATMENT
AUDIOPHILE CONTEST • 8**
Win Expensive Prizes!

departments

IN ONE EAR • 6
Letters

& OUT THE OTHER • 6
News, gossip & rumor

COVER

Eddie Murphy was photographed by ace snapper Bruce McBroom, a Hollywood movie still photographer who towers above all others — physically and otherwise.



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VOTE!



For Your Favorite Rock All Stars!



Pictured above are the rock stars selected by PLAYBOY readers as the best in their categories in last year's Playboy Music Poll. (How many of them can you identify?) More importantly, can you guess who this year's selections will be?

For a full list of nominees, a mail-in ballot, and a chance to make your vote count in this year's poll, check out the November issue of PLAYBOY at newsstands now. Also in this issue: Should College Athletics Be Abolished?, a far-out interview with Frank and Moon Unit Zappa, the beautiful ex-stews of Braniff, plus lots more. Don't miss November PLAYBOY.

In November Playboy On Sale Now

IN ONE EAR & OUT THE OTHER

Since Ampersand does not publish over the summer months, we've received very few recent, relevant or even pithy letters from our readers (only fair we didn't write either).

That was then, and now is now, so send those cards and letters, full of information and opinion, to In One Ear, 1680 North Vine, Suite 900, Hollywood, CA 90028.

BY STEVE GINSBERG

Pythons Pursue Plethora of Projects

MONTY PYTHON'S CREW is hard at work on several films, a couple of television shows and at least one book—but only one film, Monty Python's *Meaning of Life*, is an all-together-again Python presentation. They are being absolutely silent about the content of said film, telling the world that it's a "film for ichthyophiles," because "there are millions of fish out there and no one has ever gone for that audience."

The individual projects include *Yellowbeard*, written by Graham Chapman, Peter Cook and Bryan McKenna, starring Chapman and Cook and lots of famous cameos. It's a pirate movie, a comedy. *The Frog Prince* stars Robin Williams and Teri Garr and will appear on Showtime cable television in the U.S. It was produced by actress Shelley Duvall, written and directed by Eric Idle.

Privates on Parade stars John Cleese, who sings and acts and dances, but did not write any part of this. Should be out by the time this page is read.

Terry Jones, the alleged intellectual of the group, has just directed and hosted a film for British TV based on the Rupert Bear cartoon strip. He's also written a book called *Fairy Tales*, original tales he wrote for his daughter, to be published in the U.S. this fall. He's directing the *Meaning of Life*, too, which is locationing in exotic Glasgow, among others.

Animator and designer Terry Gilliam is collaborating with award-winning playwright Tom Stoppard on a screenplay which will be a followup—but not a sequel—to last year's hit, *Time Bandits*.

Michael Palin wrote and stars in *The Missionary*, with Maggie Smith, Trevor Howard and Phoebe Nichols (she was Cordelia in *Brideshead Revisited*).

It may never see the light of cinema, but there's a film afoot called *Club Paradise*, supposedly starring John Cleese and Bill Murray—sublime casting with a ridiculous plot: Cleese plays the British governor of a Caribbean island, Murray the proprietor of a resort, the island natives rebel, Cleese takes refuge in Murray's club, and from then on it's snobs vs. slob vs. rebels.

Profit Cycles

NATURALLY, YOU'VE SEEN *E.T.* But did you know that the bicycle

chase stunts trace to a Southern California-bred subculture called BMX (bicycle motocross) racing? Director Steven Spielberg even poiled a group of BMX fans, generally kids about the same age as those in the blockbuster film, and the majority claimed Kuwahara as their favorite brand. So it was a Kuwahara that levitated past the roadblocks, stolen milkcrate and hunted extraterrestrial attached. And, thanks to the supremely profitable merchandizing that always accompanies a hit movie, fans can add to their E.T. doll, their fuzzy-eared Yoda cap and their "Spock Lives!" iron-on patches a genuine, official E.T. bicycle. Kuwahara makes 'em, Spielberg takes a piece of the action. There's no business like (fill in the blank.)

Who Thought up This Ad?

WITH THE AVERAGE film costing at least \$7,000,000 to market and about \$10 million to make, film companies are forever thinking of catchy new ad lines. But if we were going to give out awards for the best remembered phrases we'd have to say that Paramount, the studio who last year advertised *Mommie Dearest* as "the biggest mother of them all," would have to win hands down.

Right now the company is test marketing *Jekyll and E. de Together Again*, a bizarre con'dy based on the old tale that star *Fridays* Mark Blankfield. One of the key ad lines:

The medical community told him to shove it up his nose—and he did."

Wait. It gets better. This Christmas Paramount is launching *Airplane II: The Sequel*, which follows the adventures of a space shuttle that is hijacked to Uranus on its way to the moon. Although the official logo is "a comedy with a new twist," the Paramount marketing department is toying with another idea: "Voyage to Uranus." (We don't write 'em, we just report 'em.)

Coppola Copes

ALTHOUGH FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA is still for sale, the man himself is not sitting around biting his nails. He's directing films and biting his nails. *The Outsiders* is finished and he's now in the midst of *Rumble Fish*, which stars many of the same actors and is also based on a book by S. E. Hinton. Both are contemporary youth dramas, although *The Outsiders* is "optimistic and heart-warming" while *Rumble Fish* is described as "expressionistic."

Make Us Laugh

The Ampersand staff needs some yucks, folks—and we depend on our readers to keep us howling. What's more, we'll pay real bucks for these guffaws. Details follow.

Send us your favorite joke. Keep it concise, typed, double-spaced and printable. If it's a cartoon joke, that's fine too—just be sure it's drawn in black ink on sturdy white paper.

We'll pay \$20 to each and every jokemaker whose artistry we print.

The rigorous criteria for judging the jokes: at least one editor has to fall down laughing. Since most of our editors fall down frequently, whether laughing or not, this could be a piece of cake.

Ampersand keeps all the jokes. We need them.

Send those hilarious words to Ampersand Jokes, 1680 North Vine, Suite 900, Hollywood, CA 90028.

AMPERSAND OF THE MONTH

This streamlined, Art Deco Ampersand came to us from Scott E. Pringle of Yoncalla, Oregon. He earns \$30 for the beauty. Others of our readers who are artistically inclined may also try to win big bucks: just send us your original Ampersands, in black ink on sturdy white paper, with your name and address clearly printed on the artwork. Art will not be acknowledged or returned. Send the squiggles to Ampersand of the Month, 1680 North Vine, Suite 900, Hollywood, CA 90028.

When You're Hot, You're Hot

MYSTICAL TEXAS STYLE guitar rocker T Bone Burnett, celebrating a soon-to-be released E.P. on Warner Bros. Records, drew a crowd to the Lingerie (a Hollywood New Wave and roots rock hangout) that included left (*Tron*) Bridges and Jamie Lee (*Halloween*) Curtis. Conspicuously absent was Pia Zadora, though Burnett dutifully scanned the crowd for her.

& When You're Not, You're Not

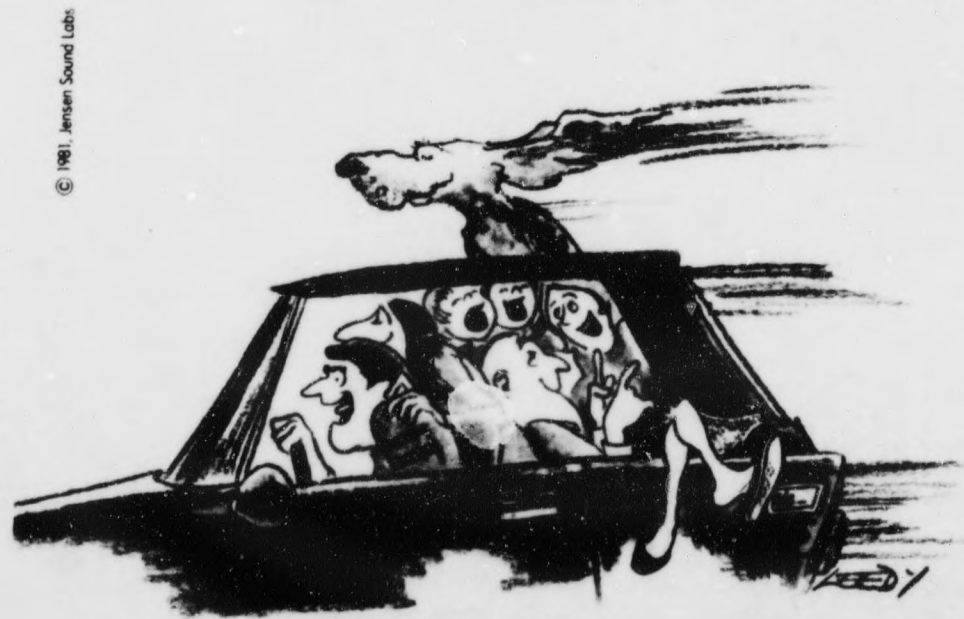
NO LONGER WILL THE MASSIVE, gleaming teeth of Donny and Marie Osmond emit pro-Hawaiian Punch messages. According to *Advertising Age*, the pair has been dropped from future marketing plans for the zippy, juice-based soft drink. Look for images of "fun and sun" to supplant the Osmonds, heretofore the principal export of Utah.

TV Hits Make New Pix

DAN AYKROYD IS IN CHICAGO shooting a new comedy, *Dr. Detroit*, wherein he plays a college professor "of chivalry and literary themes" who winds up protecting a band of prostitutes as the fictitious "Dr. Detroit." Aykroyd is contributing to the script penned by Bruce Jay Friedman and Carl Gottlieb.

As to the rumored *Three Caballeros*, which was at one time to star Aykroyd, Belushi and Steve Martin, plans have been scratched for the foreseeable future. But Aykroyd will do a cameo as a boss of N.Y.'s Holland Tunnel in *Nothing Lasts Forever*, a comedy by former SNL writer Bob Schiller. Also doing brief bits are Bill Murray, Mort Sahl, Sam Jaffe, Imogene Coca and Eddie Fisher.

SCTV COMICS John Candy, Eugene Levy and Joe Flaherty will finally make a movie together. The picture, starring Candy as a part-time drummer-limo driver who gets brainwashed by a fanatical religious aerobics group out to assassinate his politician father-in-law, was originally called *Drums over Malta*. Although the SCTV kids liked that one, the powers-that-be thought it a little innocuous and tried to come up with something better. Next was *Nummies*—*The Special Edition*, which several exes liked but the guys vetoed. As of this writing the monicker stands at *Goin' Berserk*, a nice middle-of-the-road name but certainly not in the tradition of blasphemy we've grown to expect of SCTV. Universal, the cast and director David Steinberg are in need of outside help. We can't promise a movie deal, but anyone with their own title ideas could send them to (continued on page 26)



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October, 1982 *Amperand* 7

We're Loyal to You, Masters

Re-Mastered AUDIOPHILE RECORDINGS

BY BYRON LAURSEN

Ring the door at Sweet Thunder and Vinyl yelps. Later, Vinyl accepts a pat on the head and commences to chew Mr. Duck.

Sweet Thunder is a new entrant in the half-speed re-mastered audiophile disc business. All those expensive albums that look like regular albums—but don't *sound* like regular albums. Vinyl is a black cocker spaniel who lives in Sweet Thunder's Hollywood offices. Mr. Duck is a little yellow rubber toy.

Company-mavens Howard Lowell and Russell Palmer, after introducing a visitor to Vinyl, like to point out a framed letter from Aaron Copland, whose recording of *Billy the Kid and Statements for Orchestra* was among the first of Sweet Thunder's projects. Copland, one of America's most distinguished living composers, calls the record "a true achievement in the sense that it represents more realistically the composer's thought." Citing "The clarity and brilliance of sonic mixtures," Copland concludes that the new recordings "pack more of a whallop, and keep the separate lines more distinct and more true to the live sound."

Crucial to what Sweet Thunder and the slightly older Mobile Fidelity Labs and Nautilus Recordings companies do are two things: virgin vinyl and half-speed mastering.

The former, supplied either as JVC Supervinyl from Japan or Teldec Vinyl from West Germany, is refined totally. Anti-pollution regulations prevent such thoroughgoing refinement in the United States. Half-speed mastering, a technique pioneered by the Japanese in the days of Quadrophonic, means just what it would seem to mean. The master disc is cut at half of its intended playing speed, so the cutting heads have more time to respond to the signals sent them from the master tape. As a result, the subtler sounds are more vividly drawn and the recording sounds more "live" than a conventional disc.

Though the field is relatively new (Mobile began in 1978, Nautilus in 1979 and Sweet Thunder in 1981), expansion has been remarkable. Larger companies, already established in the record business, have come forward with their own competitive "audiophile" pressings. Some observers feel

that the giants are too mass-production conscious to ever equal the independents in quality, however.

Initially, a company must select an LP they think will perform well (sonically and commercially) as a re-mastered edition. Then they strike a business agreement with the company owning the original, check the master recording for flaws and (if none are present) put the original through a meticulous copying process, using the aforementioned virgin vinyl and half-speed mastering. The results tend to be exquisite. They're also expensive. Re-mastered editions cost more than twice as much as conventional discs. They are for lovers—of a given piece of music or of their own stereo systems—only.

There are other components to this better quality product—individual hand checking of each disc off the assembly line, magnetic filtration systems at the top of the vinyl delivery hopper and use of loose fitting wrap instead of platter-bending, strangulating shrink wrap.

Interestingly, nearly as many audiophile recordings are sold in stereo shops as in normal record stores. Part of the appeal seems to be wringing the most out of a top-of-the-line stereo system. But, as the audiophile record companies like to assert, any system will produce better music if it's playing a better record.

Also, any music will sound better. Product availability in re-mastered audiophile discs runs from classics to Creedence Clearwater, from jazz to Joe Cocker, from funk to Peter Frampton.

The "Royal Treatment" AUDIOPHILE CONTEST

1st prize: *The Beatles/The Collection* from Mobile Fidelity. 13 albums on 14 discs (because the *White Album* was a double, of course). Retail value about \$325.

2-3-4-5th: One album from Nautilus and one from Sweet Thunder, to be chosen by the winners from each company's catalog. Retail value: \$36-40.

A few years back, when the "audiophile" record began to make big news in the music world, an outfit called Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab had an idea so obvious it probably required genius to figure it out: get licensing agreements for "classic" albums, refurbish them with top-grade vinyl and reissue them in versions whose sound quality would put the big commercial outfits to shame.

Their process necessitated prices several times those of the "regular" versions. But they have sold respectably. Other companies, from fledglings to giants like RCA, CBS and MCA, have rushed into the audiophile market.

Now, *Ampersand* asks the musical question: "What LP would you most like to see get the royal treatment? What great, perhaps overlooked, record of the past (or present) would most please you in an even greater version—all the highs sweeter, the lows fuller and rounder and the harmonic overtones clearer? To motivate response we're offering some delicious prizes from the vaults of the audiophile companies.

Here, as an example, is one contributor's idea of a prime candidate:

Rhapsody

Leopold Stokowski: Music of Liszt, Enesco & Smetana (RCA)

Back in the early Sixties, Stokie got together one of his periodic gatherings of New York free-lance musicians and led them in renditions of four pieces that audiences the world over are sick to death of: the Liszt *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, Enesco's *Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1*, and Smetana's *The Moldau* and *Bartered Bride* overture. The orchestra was dubbed the RCA Victor Symphony, the record was entitled *Rhapsody*, and it remained in RCA's main catalogue for nearly 20 years (it was recently reissued on their Gold Seal label), primarily because the old master conducted the darned thing as if the ink was still wet on the score.

The problem is that, at least in recent pressings, the sound, clean and well-balanced in soft passages, becomes impossibly ugly and distorted in the loud ones. As far as I'm concerned, canonization is not good enough for the mastering engineer who can rescue this one.

Sol Louis Stegel

Got the idea? Any favorite album is fair game. The five most convincing and clever (also witty, intelligent, persuasive and grammatically correct—we didn't say it would be easy) will be published in our February issue, and paid at the same generous rates that already cause freelance writers 'round the globe to roll their eyes to heaven at the mention of our name. That's 12 cents a word. All entries must be received by November 15, 1982. Naturally, all entries become the property of *Ampersand* and will be judged by our fair, thoughtful and only occasionally vicious editors. Keep it to a couple of double-spaced paragraphs on a single page. May the best music-mad *Ampersand* readers win!

Send your entries to: Royal Treatment, c/o *Ampersand*, 1680 North Vine, Suite 900, Hollywood 90028.

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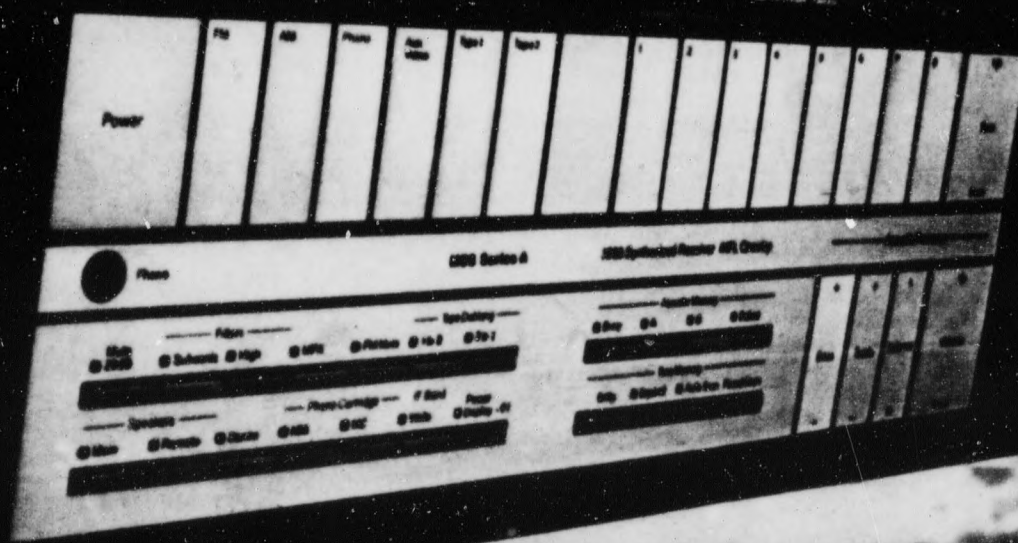
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NOVELIST JOHN KEEBLE

BY ALLAN ROUTH

John Keeble sits on his eastern Washington state ranch of 300 acres, biting on a bullet, a man born to balance things. In his roughed-in kitchen, squarely in the center of the log house that is his home, amid the fresh pine scent of the Ponderosas he has cut with his own two hands, he sits.

At 37 years old, his hair thinning, lines of worry and frustration creasing into his face and holding there from earlier days, John Keeble is tasting the first but still difficult fruits of a long ambition. There is the ranch—300 acres of arid land, land he has worked that seems to roll forever under the hot afternoon sun; it is overwhelming to see the place, to see how he has raised from the desert a garden, a crop, a few animals. And then there is the family, healthy, strong, and proud to be on their own together in the country. But beyond this, and beyond Keeble's muddy boots and dirty workclothes, behind his pleasant, how-do-you-do smile, there is John Keeble the novelist, the new-found literary gem who has finally broken the bubble of the "easterns" and has elbowed his way into the recognized portion of the publishing world. With his third novel, titled *Yellowfish*, Keeble has finally succeeded. *Time Magazine* and *Newsweek* were on the phone. *Publisher's Weekly* and the *New York Times Review of Books* spoke his name. The local Washington weeklies and Sunday supplements clamored at his rough-pine door. After two previous novels, a potpourri of articles, and a circle of literary acquaintances that ranges from Tillie Olsen in California to Ransom Jeffery in Missouri, and after years of poverty, times of confusion and disorder, times of discontent, there is now for Keeble the sweetness of victory.

Born in Canada and raised as a preacher's son along the west coast, Keeble is as much a product of the land as is his character in *Yellowfish*, Wes Erks. Keeble left the west once—a short stint of work on his doctorate at Brown on the east coast, but that, as he says, was short-lived. "I was the angry young man there, I suppose. Married, with no money, and finding Brown not to be what I thought it should have been—it was a pretty frustrating time." The one thing that Keeble resented most about Brown was the keen competition. "Not that competition is in itself a bad thing—not at all. What I resented was being forced to write on that kind of level. That wasn't for me, and neither were the departmental politics." So from Brown, Keeble returned to his precious west without his doctorate, settling in Medical Lake, Washington, near Spokane. He taught at Eastern Washington University as an associate professor in English. "I enjoyed teaching literature," he says, "it's concrete—sort of." He laughs. "Writing isn't. Maybe I shouldn't teach writing. I don't like to. College writing programs can do things, good and bad. They can give the starting writer encouragement

and strength, but they can make the mediocre writer look pretty good by teaching the angles, the hidden ropes, and they keep the dream alive for a great many who don't stand a chance. I don't know—maybe I shouldn't teach again."

Keeble's first two books—*Crab Canon* (1971) and *Mine* (1974), the latter co-written with Ransom Jeffery—were, by and large, failures. A third book was scrapped midway to completion, and *Yellowfish* started in its place. Keeble scrambled to sell it, changing agents—four agents so far in his career—haranguing the New York City publishing apparatus, pushing and pulling his way up. The book, published by Harper and Row, sold its first-run printing of 17,000 copies, and Keeble left school to write and ranch full-time. "When *Yellowfish* first began to be noticed, my colleagues at school treated me differently, with an excessive respect that amounted to envy. The nature of the book, the aggressive characters, the thriller nature of it, alienated many of them, especially the intellectuals. They pointed their fingers: 'He's a commercial writer, nothing more.' And as anyone who has spent time dopping and dabbling around an English department can tell you, there is no greater slur than that."

Like its author, *Yellowfish* is deliberate, a heavy-handed novel with an assortment of deftly done touches that take it from the realm of thriller to the realm of serious fiction. It is the story of Wes Erks, a man most like Keeble, rough, unkempt, independent, unwilling to change for any reasons other than his own. Erks makes a living ranching, but he picks up extra money running illegal Chinese immigrants across the border into America, from Canada to San Francisco. The book deals with one particular load of passengers and the trek Erks makes with them. One of the passengers is a wanted man, wanted by the Triad—a Chinese Mafioso organization—and as the story progresses, the reader finds the Triad wants this one Chinaman bad enough to commit murder. On the surface, it's a cloak-and-dagger suspense story, complete with dark-colored Lincolns (belonging to the bad guys) and a noble but criminal good guy. But what has drawn attention and critical acclaim has not been the surface story, but instead the story that lies just below—the story of Erks, the story of travel and death.

Wes Erks is the last of a breed of men who, if we are to believe popular myth, were the kind largely responsible for settling the American continent. Erks resents government—"the fine print men"—and despises sing-song morality; he hates weakness, especially in himself, loves excitement, and seeks to find his ultimate capabilities and his own personal code of morality. Of course, what Erks does for extra money is illegal; but his breaking of the law is the breaking of written laws, while his compliances are with unwritten laws, the laws of humans thrown together randomly to survive as best

they can. Erks could be called a noble savage, as well as the sensitive, confused rebel. During the long haul to San Francisco, Erks discovers himself and his boundaries. He is shot at, chased, harangued, double-crossed, but he remains true to his ally, the wanted Chinese immigrant, because they have been thrown together, both with a job to do, and Erks is, in the end, successful. He is a larger-than-life hero, but still he is plausible, and the reader applauds him.

Another element of Keeble's novel that has drawn attention is the relationship that is strongly established between landforms, and history, and the present day. As Erks travels a southward route out of Canada, he associates his location with what has been there in the past—the Fraser party of explorers, the early Indians, the Donner party who were forced to survive a winter by feeding on their own dead. Erks is characterized as an amateur historian of sorts, and as he travels, the land around him piques his scholarly memory, imploring him to call up the past. It is Keeble's conviction that land, its forms and shapes and general aura, dictates who we are and who we will be. This, along with our history, makes up our own unique existence. Men of the Pacific Northwest, a sprawling, still virgin portion of America, are seen as mirror images of the land, and of the men who came before them. Erks is therefore unsettled, like his land, and has a sense of treachery of the land, what it can and has done. It is an old philosophy, this belief that land and history are the mainstays of what we are

—it is the philosophy of Jefferson, of Emerson and Thoreau. But Keeble takes it further than any of them, by still believing it in an age when most of us live in apartments or in suburbia. Keeble wonders. Without land, without our own private struggle to live what every rancher and farmer and settler has experienced, what kind of people are we becoming? Rootless, confused, spiritually exhausted?

As for the negative responses to *Yellowfish*, most mention the uncanny similarities between Keeble and his influences, notably those of Faulkner. "I resent that kind of foolishness," Keeble says, testily, "those blanket statements like that. Rhythm—my rhythm is different. It is my own. A writer is the synthesis of the writers before him. There's even an homage to Steinbeck in the book, an homage to his *The Grapes of Wrath*, and there is some of Faulkner, and Joyce, too, in the book, but I'd never read any of the Snopes stories before [stories that bear close resemblances to a few scenes in *Yellowfish*] and I've only recently read Kesey." Ken Kesey is another "problem" for Keeble, since Kesey has with his two books (*One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Sometimes a Great Notion*) already established himself strongly as a national spokesman/author from the Northwest. "There are many Northwest writers," Keeble says, a bit tiredly, "other than Kesey. I'm not jockeying for a position next to or above or below him. I resent that, again. I write, and write as well as I can—I leave the rest of it to other people, it's out of my hands. Kesey is

famous. So are a hundred other writers. I'm just me—that's all there is, that's all that matters." And of other writers from the west? "Tillie Olsen is a fine writer—a combination of Sinclair Lewis, Ernest Hemingway, Theodore Dreiser. She skipped modernism, that Philip Roth style of trash writing. We need more writers like her who aren't from New York City. And we don't need the New York City critics telling us what to read and what not to read. I'd like to see the west have its own publishing apparatus, but we don't."

"There are those writers," Keeble continues, "both dead and alive, who came before me. They're all important. But in the end, the writer is nobody when he sits to write. He must do it all over again everytime he sits down. That leaves only the individual—alone."

John Keeble walks plaintively out the front door of his log house. A heavy ax handle works as a sliding leverage weight on the door. There are no locks or latches anywhere in the house. Outside, the late day sun has turned even hotter, and the pigs are in need of watering, and the lone goose Keeble keeps for his own amusement honks for water, too. The garden's strawberries, still unbloomed, are nonetheless green and velvety. With a large dirty hand, a hand that couldn't possibly write a book, let alone three of them, and with his moustache untrimmed and hanging over his lips, John Keeble grabs up the watering hose and starts for the pigpen.

Allan Routh is a freelance writer from Eugene, Oregon.

A Writer in Rancher's Clothes



BEWARE THE YLLABIAN SPACE GUPPY!

BY P. GREGORY SPRINGER

A Galactic Neophyte Sees a Vision of Video Games in His Sleep, and Begins a Manual of Philosophy to Appease his Conscience.

LEVEL THREE

Choose One Enter A or B.

A) You never play video games.
B) Smart bomb my Swarmsers; I'm ready for the Yllabian Dog Fight.

(Correct answer below.)

You walk past. Dens of electronic attractions only repel you. You refuse to play them on some obscure pretext or another. They waste money, they make ugly sounds, they confuse or distract attention to the extreme, they are the bastards of a technological age, they are foolish... or so you think. But you never play them, so you don't know.

Perhaps you are wise to hesitate. Once the appeal of the video games has taunted you into a wrangle, all safety fades. Doubts enter your mind. You find yourself looking for quarters. You close your eyes and see rainbow explosions. Again and again and again...

(Correct answer is B if you have read this far. Proceed to the next level.)

LEVEL TWO

Some basic, temporal strategies are laid for a number of games. If you still insist the games won't graze you, hyperspace ahead to level three. If you expect solutions, proceed with extreme caution.

The best general strategy for all electronic video games is to practice. All the advice in the world won't inform your fingers when and how to punch "thrust" with your index finger instead of "fire" with your thumb. Words can help, but experience means knowledge. Games can be plotted in your sleep, on paper, or daydreaming — imagining the screen and envisioning your moves schematically — but nothing comes easy. Mastery takes quarters.

Much of the for-what-it's-worth advice below has been taken from the PLATO computer system notes: files communication network. Hundreds of anonymous computer addicts, sitting at terminals around the world, exchange information over PLATO on a myriad of subjects;

video games, logically, have a file unto themselves.

STARGATE

The sequel to DEFENDER, STARGATE has all the wonders that made its predecessor the prince of video games, plus more. The landers, mutants, bombers, baiters, pods and swarmsers are still deadly, but you're fighting new threats in addition: firebombers, fireballs, Yllabian space guppies, dynamos, space hum, phred, Big Red, and munchies. Since unlike most video games, the enemies attack you simultaneously, you might expect STARGATE to be even more difficult than the highest DEFENDER. But no, STARGATE has some minor DEFENDER bugs smoothed out. Smart bombs work more consistently and don't slow the game down. The explosions look nicer, so that you might not even mind losing your planet. Mutants and landers move more slowly. Higher scores are easier to get.

Tips: The volcano spurring lava is a decorative distraction; ignore it. During the first wave, try ignoring most of the enemies and concentrate on saving humanoids from the capturing landers. Catch four humanoids on your spaceship (being careful not to touch ground or they'll hop off), then fly into the Stargate warp box and be instantly transported to the fourth wave.

Don't forget to use Inviso. You are invulnerable when you hold down the button with your right thumb, continuing to thrust and fire with your other fingers. Inviso is great for getting out of a tight spot, so use it sparingly.

If you get blisters on your right hand, you're probably spending too much time on "thrust" instead of making good use of your vertical stick. (See Level Six for more sexual theory.) Professional callouses appear on the left hand.

STARGATE wears your eyes out, but worthily. A few games leave you with multicolor hallucinatory afterimages for hours.

DONKEY KONG

Mr. Arakawa of Nintendo claims, with a giggle, that DONKEY KONG is now the most popular game in both Japan and

America. The name comes from a bad translation of Japanese for "stupid gorilla." As the hero climbs to rescue the girl from the gorilla, he must use ladders, conveyor belts, and the unique "jump" capability to dodge falling fireballs, fuel carts, and barrels. The game was released in Japan in July 1981, and test-marketed in the States that same month. Nintendo has ceased production of its other games to concentrate on DK, and the key to its special status is psychological. DONKEY KONG has a role-playing feel, a narrative dimension usually lacking in games.

No one knows what's in the barrels.

TEMPEST

Atari's Quadrascan nonlinear graphics moved from black and white (ASTEROIDS, RED BARON) to color with TEMPEST, an abstract space battle of shapes. Although likely to undergo new programming transformations in the near future, some controversy already rages about the best ways of playing it now. Some skip ahead to high levels for high points and fast play; others proceed through the levels for a longer game but inequitable point accumulation.

If, instead of starting on level one you begin at nine, you'll receive a bonus of 54,000 points (but not the extra lives awarded for regular accumulation of 20K and 40K points). If you make it past level 11, you get 74K bonus points. Some think spinning the knob toward "expert" at game's beginning is, thus, "cheating," but it is a way for a good player to face a challenge sooner and get more points more quickly. If you make it up through level 16 the slow way, you don't get as many points, which is rather unfair.

The color patterns change from blue, to red, to yellow, to light blue on the 49th level. Shoot spikers when you can, or they'll come back out as tankers. You can tell if a tanker is going to change into two fuseballs or two flippers by looking at the center of the tanker. A pinkish center reveals that it will change into fuseballs.

Many players sit on one tube and fire at a steady rate of about 3 shots per second, until flippers approach. Then they fire as fast as possible. Some think this method, which can last up to 19 levels, is boring. Others think it's smart.

TEMPEST is not cute; it is the reductive essence of video game space battle, almost the idea of it put into abstract motion graphics.

ALAGA

The Chicago manufacturers, Midway/Bally, pronounce it "GAL-uh-guh," but some say "Guh-LA-guh." Either way, the game improves upon the space invaders theme by having the attacking insects swarm down in flying patterns before lining up above to continue attack. The key to advanced scores is to allow your ship to be captured by the Galaga's blue beam; then, if you are careful to kill the captor with your remaining ship, you get your old ship back for double fire power against the insects. Stay near the center of the board when possible, dodging the insect fire carefully and swiftly. Remaining in a fixed position for the first two or three challenging stages works to best advantage, even when the dragonflies start spinning down in curlycue confusion.

FROGGER

Not all video games provide space battle. FROGGER has the earthbound plight of the lowly frog trying to cross the road and river without getting squashed or eaten. Move as fast as possible; every second saved earns points. Move your frog forwards or backwards; don't think you have to stay on a sinking turtle's back just because there's no log in front of you. The real key to a good third level play is to use the alligator's tail as a leaping place; it doesn't look safe, but it is.

FROGGER scores never range into the astronomical, and there seem to be bugs in many of the machines: sometimes your frog will jump in a different direction from what you expected. But it's a game of simple pleasures and survivals, almost with an anti-technological theme. Your graceful comedown to reality after intergalactic voyaging: the Peace Frog.

LEVEL ONE

The literature of video games is fly-by-night. Ken Uston's bestseller, *Mastering Pac-Man*, Tom Hirschfeld's *How to Master the Video Games*, and the many other published attempts to circumvent loss

frustration in the arcades can't be of use beyond the life of the game machines, and most machines have a life expectancy measured in months rather than years. Does anyone play 1979's original hit, SPACE INVADERS, except as nostalgia? Will PAC-MAN be an obsolete curio by 1983?

Bernard M. Powers, director of marketing for the Bally's Aladdin's Castle chain of arcades, claims that PAC-MAN holds some kind of record, with a peak popularity that lasted a record 14 months. "It's on the downswing now," Powers says. "The life cycle of games is critical. ASTEROIDS, which was released the same time as PAC-MAN, lasted six months. We hope for six months with any game. Those few long-lasting ones you fall in love with."

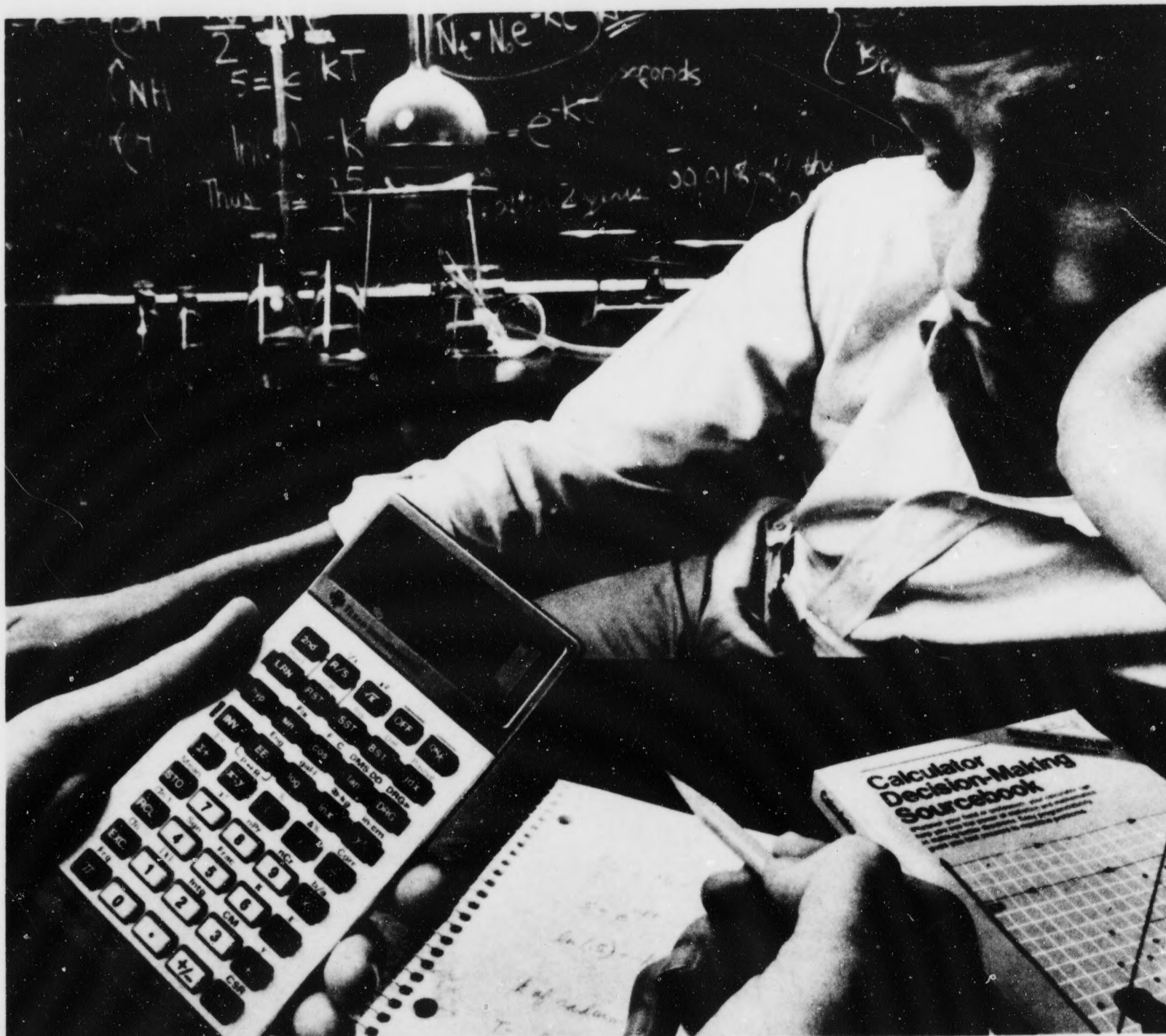
New games about which nothing has (yet) been dissected by book include DIG DUG (an underground maze game), FRENZY (an improved and more difficult version of BERSERK), ROBOTRON (another high-speed, humanistic save-the-world drama from the makers of DEFENDER), the three-dimensional ZAX XON, and TRON, a four-part game cleverly based upon the Disney movie.

Already new chips and challenges have made PAC-MAN overly familiar. MS. PAC-MAN, a ribboned dancing female gobbler, vies for attention. Uston's careful patterns for the original PAC-MAN may still work on some machines, but the book is likely to be classic only in the sense that it was made obsolete upon publication.

An article in *Playboy* recently gave strategies for CENTIPEDE, DEFENDER, and PAC-MAN, but the pattern for the latter differed considerably from Uston's model. "On the first three boards, the movements of the four ghosts aren't predictable, so pattern following is a useless — and dangerous — affair," was the *Playboy* Philosophy. Uston, however, brazenly gave useless and dangerous patterns to use, some of which worked on machines only in regional locations. At least for the first boards, you are better off practicing on paper, basing your moves on the close observations done at familiar machines. Remember, you can't do a flawless board one pattern if you make any mistakes. You'll have to put in another quarter, and start from scratch, which is frustrating.

Answer books exist because winning is both paramount and an im-

(continued on page 14)



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**TEXAS
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BEWARE

possibility. Robert Lewis Stevenson's dictum that "to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive" has lost meaning in an arena without any notion of "sportsmanship." How do you play fair against a machine? The challenge is playing to the point of boredom (i.e., "to win"), outwitting the computer program by hook, crook or strategy book.

The manufacturers know this. Most are reluctant to disclose the simple rules of their games, forcing each player to figure things out by trial and error. Nineteen-year-old Hirschfeld's manual does well by providing simple rules rather than arcane strategies, and his initial volume for 30 games has not one, but two, sequels in the works for the more recent machines and updated programs. The better you understand what you are watching on the screen, the more power you have towards achieving the sought-after boredom border. (See Level Seven).

The informed player won't mistakenly shoot his little pink humanoid in DEFENDER, taking them for yet another enemy. The smart player will trust his own experience over the touted rules of strategists.

LEVEL FOUR

Typical Attacks and Uncopyrighted Rebuffs

Attack #1: "These games are corrupting our youth," says a Long Island housewife who is working toward their banishment in her area, a move already taken in parts of Texas, Rhode Island, Illinois, Massachusetts, other states and even entire countries. "They are not wholesome. They mesmerize our children, they addict them and force them to mindlessly pour one quarter after another into the slots. We see 15-year-olds playing on school nights and during school hours. We want the games out of our town."

Rebuff: Mitchell Robin, a child psychologist and instructor of data processing, wrote the *New York Times* with this statement: "I have seen absolutely no scientific evidence to date that video games are 'mesmerizing our children.' There has simply been no such research. Campaigns against video games are created out of a fear of the unknown, in this case, computers. Adults are afraid of the power of computers, because we didn't grow up with them. What better way to be introduced to them than through friendly software such as computer games?"

Attack #2: "People are separated from society already with each new technological advance. The car, the telephone, television... all keep us at a distance. You don't have a comrade in arms. Even when you play the games with someone else, you're just waiting your turn. The machine stands between you more than ever."

Rebuff: "Unlike many other activities, electronic gaming brings families closer together," writes Frank Laney, Jr., editor of *Electronic*

Games Magazine. "How many other things can mother and son, father and daughter, enjoy on an equal basis? Most participation sports give such a tremendous advantage to bigger and stronger players that the idea of, for instance, a family game of tennis or golf becomes an exercise in boredom and frustration." And Mitchell Robin again: "Children who aren't athletically inclined can use video games as a means to success that is accepted by their peers. That type of acceptance through a particular skill is very important to the psychological health of adolescents."

Attack #3: "The games are actually sort of stress-related," says Larry Gertz, owner of Chess and Games, one of the largest game retailers on the West Coast. "I find myself wasted when I'm competing with Entex Football Four. I'm exhausted physically and mentally. I can feel the muscles in my body all tense." Contributing editor of *Games* magazine, Roger Dionne, writes, "I was amazed at the hostility the machine has aroused in me. I walked away trembling." The DEFENDER callous and PAC-MAN blister have already been cited as other physical handicaps of the games.

Rebuff: Steve Nelson, doctoral candidate at New York University, deduces from his research that "a video game can teach you how to process information on several channels at once. The Army and Air Force are experimenting with them. The rapid increase in learning ability they can provide is amazing. Therapists have been using them in rehabilitation of the handicapped." Linda Duesterhaus, mother of a 3-year-old video arcade habitué named Zack, comments, "People don't have to use their wits anymore. Maybe some street people survive that way, but mostly society's too safe. The positive aspect of video games is that one must be alert in many sensory modes at once."

Attack #4: "I don't see why people put their money in them. They're frustrating, make irritating sounds, and all you get if you win is more of the same and all of it is torture. And the people who hang out there are just a mess," comments Katherine, a young library assistant who likes the theatre.

Rebuff: This is pure prejudice, based upon bordello assumptions from the pinball past. The person just hasn't tried a game suited to his or her personality. Perhaps Katherine should try DONKEY KONG for its narrative element. The best answer here, however, is just a "you won't know until you try it" laugh. The pool hall mystique does get a foothold in some arcades, handed down from the uninformed fears of River City. Not worth huffing at.

Attack #5: Audio-visual coordinator and part-time TV talk show host Scott Parsons says, "The real question is whether video games are more addictive than other addictive things, and I think they are. The manufacturers are just beginning to realize how to capitalize upon this aspect of the games."

Rebuff: None. Change the subject. He is right.

LEVEL FIVE

"The Video Arcade of Beastly Love"

"My baby's spending all her time
Dodging monsters, bugs, and climb-
ing up the ladders on her electronic toy.
She dreams of centipedes and fleas.
But she used to dream of me.
Those Space Invaders have invaded all my joy

(Chorus)
Slip a token in the slot
See the creatures getting shot
Hear the blips and boops and beeps and monster feasts
You're gonna play until you crash
Machines are swallowing your cash
In the video arcade where my baby plays around with other beasts

"It's her and those machines.
She sits and drools at all the screens.
Rubbing buttons that spurt out the brightest lights.
Gorf tells her what to try,
and the Tempest lets her fly.
She thinks it's better than the way we spent our nights

She figures out attack plans
For her darling yellow Pac-Man.
But that legless, hungry monster's just a blur.
Still she'd rather run him 'round
Since he never puts on pounds.
And he hasn't any arms to bother her.

The answer is, I guess,
To learn to play like all the rest
Become a stud beside her on adjoining stool.
Still our love won't last too long
If she discovers Donkey Kong.
I know that hairy monkey's gonna be her fool."

LEVEL FIVE

The sexual component of video games isn't due to suggestive images on the screen. There are very few — if any — of these and they're best left to the archaic pinball era. Instead, sexuality becomes both sublimated and transformed into metaphor during the experience of videogaming.

The DEFENDER player, for example, needs a physical positioning over the machine that allows no room for distraction. He may have to use an elbow to fly into hyperspace, since both his hands and all his mental power must be intricately aligned with the buttons and joystick. As he defends his humanoids and planet against the invaders, the emotional experience grows into one of serious righteousness and a do-right edge of will. The humanoids, of course, are androgynous.

Winning any of the video games at best entitles you to put your initials at the top of the board. Machismo conquest and egotism can trail one whose initials frequently are seen on various machines and in various arcades. "Stud" has become one common designation for a games adept, while "wimp" is the sort of congenial taunt allocated one who fails.

Sex-linking the games made a breakthrough with PAC-MAN, the first video game to attract as many women as men. One regular male player insists it is the perfect pick-up ploy, offering a round of PAC-MAN as an opening line. Because the yellow Japanese gobbling ball survived the sex test better than any before it, the new game MS. PAC-MAN has now been introduced, in which a female gobbler, wearing a ribbon and dancing in circles

when captured, moves in pink and yellow mazes and through a dual set of Freudian tunnels. Special interboards depict the new Pac-Woman falling in love with the Original, a first (but probably not the last) in the infant world of video game evolution.

LEVEL SIX

Philosophical Finish

A bored kid sits on his stool, watching the yellow PAC-MAN run by itself toward the bottom left wall. Look, Ma, no hands, he seems to want to say, but to whom? No one is watching, no one cares, and the boy hesitates briefly before continuing his pattern play to rack up impressive points. Having spent his lunch money to be here, he has achieved the ultimate goal of video games: success by saturation.

The theory of entertainment is that the formula shouldn't change. Entertainment is a commodity which trades best when quality control is high, standard, and utterly predictable. Art, on the other hand, makes us nervous, challenges our assumptions, involves change, and lives on risk. McDonald's hamburgers, with across-the-country uniformity in its product, make a good case for entertainment food.

The movies rely upon a great deal of repetition — sometimes called sequels — to bolster box office. That's entertainment. Movies, however, are trying hard now to win back the dollars that video games have stolen away from them. Five billion dollars were grossed by the video games industry in 1981; only \$2.8 billion came to the movie box office. Hollywood is wasting no time getting the attractive video image onto the big screen. *Escape from New York* and *Wolfen* were just two of last year's movies to fea-

ture video-generated techniques, and Walt Disney Studios have released *Tron*, a feature-length computer animated film about life within the videogames reality. (One might be tempted to claim that *Star Wars* inspired the videogames boom — and there is some connection — but the first computer game was called SPACE WAR, created in 1962 by Steve Russell.) More than this, film exhibitors are bringing games into the lobbies of the theaters, hoping to augment the concessions income which already accounts for the largest percentage of a theater owner's income. Movies are just an excuse. That's entertainment, too.

Are video games art? Of course not. For a quarter you get a scenario that is infallible and predictable, like a good 48¢ hamburger. But with that limitation, you also get a chance to interact in ways *Raiders of the Lost Ark* never could provide, and the aesthetic experience is quite likely of a higher order on the machines than at the movie. The game lets you relate, revise, devise, experience all the synthetic emotions of hate, fear, anxiety, and (with MS. PAC-MAN) even romance. You come away sweating, and you — not Indiana Jones — have done something about the survival of the plastic planet. Aldous Huxley's prediction of participation "feelies" in *Brave New World* may only be as far away as 3-D and holographic video games.

Not since classical music has any entertainment form allowed as much fascination within a rigidly fixed form. The rigid guidelines of a Bach fugue — consistent within a strict structure — have a symmetry and recursive design already praised highly by computerists. It takes many many listenings before one tires of the intricate music that's hard to unwind. Video games are as constricted as a sonnet, yet — like Wordsworth's praise of that confinement — have the beauty of playing within pure form. The games may provide the revenge of the TV generations. We're capable of talking back at last, we're finally getting our crack.

Monotony, uniformity, and hypnosis have their place in coping with a rough world where sportsmanship is largely a game for hypocrites. A quarter may give comfort. If Marcuse or McLuhan were alive today, much hypothesizing about the future of a planet populated by video gamers could be expected.

Are games really that important? Hesse thought so when he wrote *The Glass Bead Game*, predicting a world where gaming controlled all politics, religion, and language. Certainly the Zen archer would have DEFENDER blisters on his hands. Even if artificially induced, the "hypnosis" of video games creates an intense emotional concern, something referred to in the Sixties as "involvement." Maybe it will spread to other human realms once the feeling is reawakened. The more things change, the more they stay the same. The universe recycles and is saved once again. Insert coin.

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ROBERT HAYS

At the Controls Again in AIRPLANE II

BY RICHARD LEVINSON

On soundstage 16 at Paramount Studios in Hollywood, a spaceship bearing the word "Pan Universe" sits crash-landed in a moonscape of gravel and papier mâché boulders. The front hatch is open, the emergency slide extended. Passengers are jumping out (sans breathing apparatus) and sliding down to the surface, where they are met by two very alien-looking Hare Krishnas, who wish them a good day and hand them flowers.

It's the next to last day of principal photography for the comedy *Airplane II: the Sequel*, and writer/director Ken Finkleman is conducting a rehearsal of the lunar escape scene. He's not entirely satisfied with the placement of people and debris, so it's Lights! Camera! Wait a minute! as the crew relocates scenery.

Just outside the soundstage, Robert Hays sits in his dressing trailer, waiting to be called to make-up. As he did in the 1980 hit *Airplane!* Hays co-stars (with Julie Hagerty) as Ted Striker, dashing, if reluctant, hero. (This time, Striker is called upon to save the first commercial lunar passenger shuttle from disaster. Hilarity, of course, ensues.) Hays is a likeable, talkative, outgoing actor who has been described as "strong, sensitive, and devastatingly attractive," as well as "unpredictably wacky."

These days, Robert Hays is also hot. After six years of low-or-no-pay repertory theatre in San Diego, he was cast to appear in a segment of television's *Harry O*. This led to jobs working on such TV fare as *Love Boat*, *Wonder Woman*, *Laverne & Shirley*, and specials like *The Young Pioneers* and *Mark Twain's America*. Then, a stroke of good fortune landed him in the middle of *Airplane!* which became one of the most successful comedies of all time. (According to Paramount, it has grossed \$158 million so far, surpassed only by *Animal House* in the comedy sweepstakes.) After that came the disappointing *Take This Job and Shove It*, and recent starring roles in three more features due for release soon.

If an actor's career was ever zooming, Hays' is. So, why reprise a role in a sequel? "I was real hesitant to do it," says Hays, "but they threatened my family." In addition to which, Hays' press agent, Tony Angellotti, jokingly points out, the release and success of *Airplane II* will make Hays "the richest man in the universe" (huge salary, undisclosed, and a percentage, also undisclosed).

Hays also notes that "it would be difficult to do a sequel without the people who were in the first one."



For *Airplane II*, Julie Hagerty, Lloyd Bridges and Peter Graves are back, "but two notable people, Bob Stack and Leslie Nielsen, are missing. It's too bad they're not here."

Three other notable people are missing, too. "The Zuckers" (Jerry Zucker, David Zucker and Jim Abrahams) who wrote and directed *Airplane!* opted to stay as far away from the sequel as possible. According to Jerry Zucker, it came as no surprise that Paramount wanted a follow-up to the film. "Basically, studios aren't creative organizations, they're financial ones. It makes perfect sense that Paramount would want a sequel to such a successful movie."

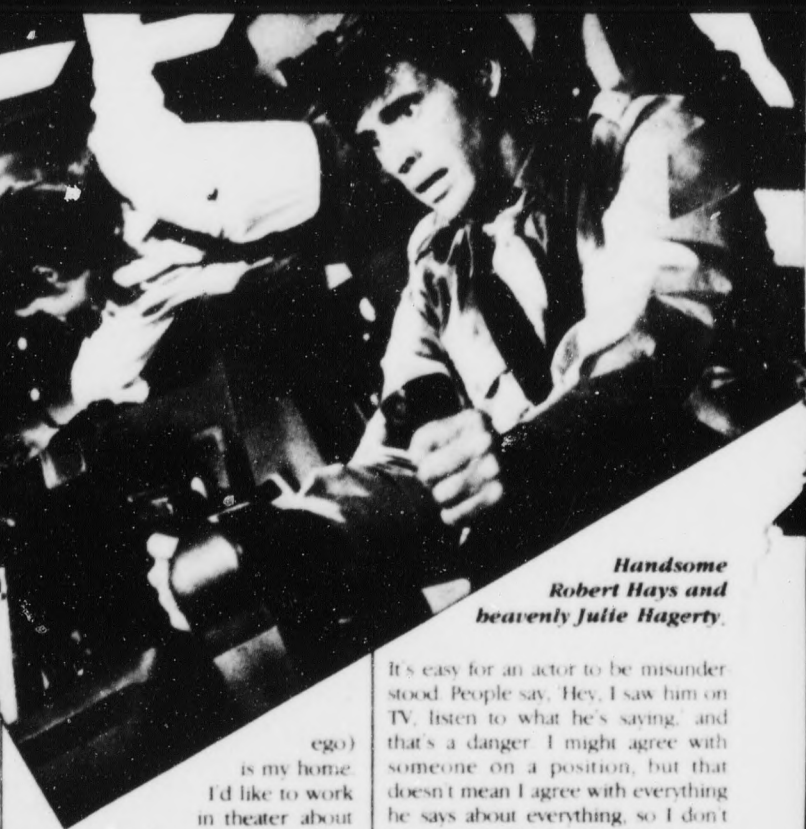
If *Airplane II* is not the Zuckers' film, it is Howard Koch's. Koch, who began his movie career in 1944, acted as Executive Producer for *Airplane!* (allaying some of Paramount's "who are these Zucker kids anyway?" fears), and is producing the sequel. A knowledgeable, active and candid veteran, he provides a vital link between the two films, and has been "first-to-come-last-to-leave" during all eight weeks of filming. If this has caused any friction between him and Finkleman, none is apparent. "If this was my first directing assignment, I'd want someone like me around, too." (Finkleman's only previous big screen credit is as screenwriter for *Grease II*.) Asked if the Zuckers' non-involvement was a disappoint-

ment, Koch says, "Sure. It would have been wonderful if they were here. But Ken's been doing a great job. I've seen about thirty minutes pieced together so far, and it's really funny stuff." Koch goes on to describe how the original film's approach has been maintained with appearances by Raymond Burr, William Shatner, Chad Everett, Chuck Connors, Aldo Ray, Kent McCord and Sonny Bono, either overplaying their well known characters, or, in Everett's case, playing an "against-type" villain.

(If that sounds like a Merv Griffin "Salute to the Vast Wasteland" line-up, that's all right. Part of the charm of *Airplane!* was its use of performers primarily known for their television work. Even more than film, TV "types" actors so completely that placing those well-known personas in a manic comedy worked much better than casting, say, Harvey Korman or, God forbid, Chevy Chase.)

Hays himself had been identified only with television before *Airplane!* "As hard as it is to break into TV, that's how hard it is to break into film from TV," he says. "It's getting better, but there's still the feeling that movies are a sort of Cadillac looking down on the Volkswagen of television."

How about theater? "Heck, yeah. That's what I want to do. For the craft of acting, that's like a revitalization. The Old Globe Theatre (in San Di-



Handsome
Robert Hays and
heavenly Julie Hagerty.

ego) is my home. I'd like to work in theater about five weeks at a time, but I can't afford to take six months to do a play right now."

"The reality is that I would like to have a career that builds slowly over a long period of time. I want to be around, working, when I'm 70 or 80, and have a nice, steady income. I think a lot of people, not all, but some, are pricing themselves right out of the business. But it's real complicated, because when you're negotiating, they go in expecting you to try to soak them. If you try to beat them up and strangle them, then they say, 'O.K., well, you're all right.' But if you say, 'Hey guys, I just want to make a film,' they say, 'Oh, wow, this guy's a geek.'"

Hays is concerned about being typed. "I don't want to be identified with only one kind of role. I'd like to do a variety. The problem is, there's a certain thing you're expected to play. If you're likeable, or if you're a real evil villain, for example." Still, the roles he chooses (and these days, he can choose) tend to be that "likeable guy." That isn't an accident. "My all-time favorite director is Frank Capra, and Preston Sturges is another great one," Hays says, naming two directors known for their handling of drama with a light touch. "I'm not into gore or any of that." How about angst? "Well, there's nothing wrong with pain and suffering, but it doesn't mean you can't combine it with stuff to make the audience laugh."

It's plain that Hays likes doing comedy, as evidenced by his other upcoming films. He describes one (*Trenchcoat*, with Margo Kidder) as an "international-spy-mystery-comedy-intrigue, or how about a spy-thriller comedy-mystery, or maybe a sci-fi-action-western?" The others, *Utilities* and *Some Sunny Day*, both find Hays as, in the words of Tony Angellotti, "rebels, but not angry young men. Just guys who are affected by inequities in the system, and actively set out to do something about them."

Off-camera, Hays is less active in social causes. "I support Greenpeace and the Cousteau Society with donations, but I'm not much on groups."

It's easy for an actor to be misunderstood. People say, 'Hey, I saw him on TV, listen to what he's saying,' and that's a danger. I might agree with someone on a position, but that doesn't mean I agree with everything he says about everything, so I don't become publicly identified with issues."

The loner in Hays is also apparent in his private life. Rock climbing, skiing and flying (he's a qualified pilot) take up much of his recreation time. Although he is often touted as a "sex symbol" by such touters as *Cosmopolitan* magazine, he says he has never been a "chaser," and is now exclusively involved with a woman he has dated off and on since high school.

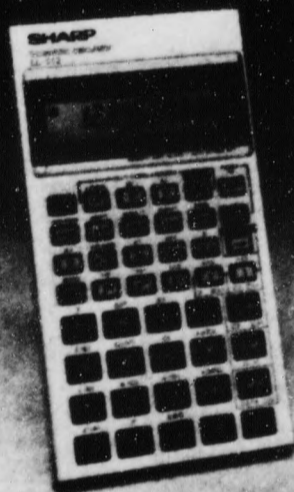
Back on the set, the dry ice machine has been turned on, and crew members are busy moving fans around to blow the mist in the proper direction. Koch walks by, and shares a joke with Hays.

Koch goes on to talk a little about the release of *Airplane II*. "I think we're pretty much already booked. There's about 17 or 18 states where the theatre owners have to see the film before they can bid on it, and we'll have it ready to show them in August or September. You know, there's always comparisons. Some people have even compared *Young Doctors in Love* to *Airplane!* But this one's great, with all the talent, and when Bob and Julie come on, we've got 'em." Koch asks if I have everything I need, and ambles off to check on the progress of the crew. "I'll be happy if we can just get this shot," he says.

In the "Production Information" package for *Airplane II*, the original *Airplane!* is described as "making an unprecedented impression on the American psyche." Allowing for a bit of indulgence by the publicity department, that's not altogether fanciful. A relatively low-budget, certainly oddball film, *Airplane!* achieved both critical and public acclaim for its performances, parody, and outright silliness. Whether *Airplane II: the Sequel* can re-capture the comedic feel of the original won't be discovered until its release in December. But if *Airplane II* even comes close to the success of its parent, Howard Koch won't be surprised, Robert Hays will be the richest man in the universe, and audiences will have something to really laugh about.

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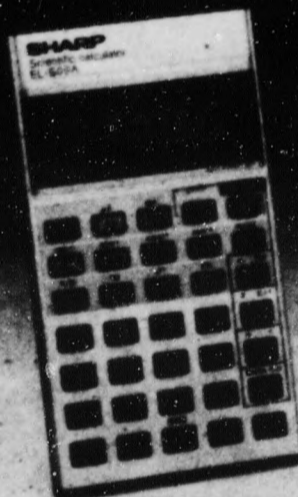
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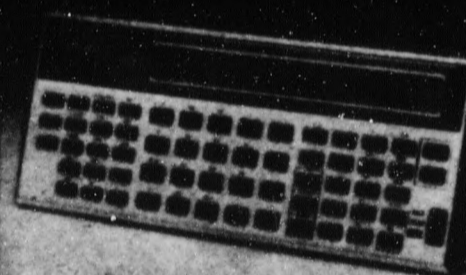
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EATING RAOUL

Unsolved Murders, Unlimited Laughs

BY P. GREGORY SPRINGER

Paul and Mary Bland, just like Bonnie and Clyde before them, are (more-or-less) young and in love (although they sleep in separate beds). Also, they kill people.

Paul works in a liquor shop in a bad neighborhood until the connoisseur in him obsessively orders a case of \$500-a-bottle wine, and he's fired. Mary works in a hospital, ever at the mercy of lecherous patients. When the weirdos of Los Angeles begin to invade the sanctity of Paul and Mary's apartment, a scheme emerges. Why not entice these loathsome "perverts" with a want ad for swingers, hit them smartly over the head with a frying pan, and use the money in their pockets to finance a dream restaurant in the suburbs? Why not call it "Paul and Mary's Country Kitchen" and feature the Bland Enchilada?

A fine plan for people who are fed up. But, what to do with the bodies?

That's where locksmith/burglar Raoul unpredictably enters director Paul Bartel's new independent picture, *Eating Raoul*, a title which alone ensures originality to a film already sopping with sarcastic wit. When *Eating Raoul* is seen around the country this fall through Twentieth-Century Fox distribution, the delay and production headaches that went into its genesis should be quickly forgotten.

Eating Raoul makes Bartel's fourth excursion into mass murder, although the soft-shaped, balded and bearded 44-year-old from Brooklyn might be mistaken for a classical pianist or a sympathetic high school teacher. With a background of study in French and Italian, a cultural aesthetic which leans toward theater and opera, and a role on the selection committee of Filmex, Bartel's role as a director of mayhem and a manic comic actor make him one of the most contradictory figures in Hollywood today. In fact, Bartel's most recognizable role as an actor has been Mr. McGree, the music teacher, in *Rock and Roll High School*, a role he recalls with both fondness and agony.

"Do you remember the scene where the paper airplane with a note from the principal landed in my ear?" Bartel comments from his Los Angeles home. "It was an extremely painful experience. This cardboard airplane slid along a piece of monofilament anchored to a plug glued inside my ear, causing a terrible vacuum suction with a sort of implosion everytime the plane landed. It would bounce back, ruining the take."

In keeping with his elite ironic style, Bartel revealed that his favorite moments in film have all been portions of films he had either directed or acted in. Unlike those of any other cult director, Bartel's films all seem to inherit distinct and separate cults of followers, with very little overlap. His name is not a household word.

Private Parts (1972), his first fea-

ture, passed through the first-run circuit with record rapidity, but still does a "fairly constant business" through its 16mm distributor, UA Classics. "It's about a young runaway girl from Ohio who takes refuge in her aunt's rundown hotel in downtown LA," Bartel struggles to synopsize. "My mind is drawing a complete blank today. Anyway, there she encounters a series of sinister eccentrics, one of whom becomes her secret admirer but is responsible for the horrible fate in store for her."

Following *Private Parts*, Bartel went to work on *Death Race 2000* (1975) for Roger Corman, a film which inspired drivers around the country to joke about a "point" system for running down babies, nurses, and geriatric patients, the blackest of comic notions rooted in the reality of contemporary highway tactics. A then unknown Sylvester Stallone was one of the players.

It was for the filming of *Death Race 2000* that Bartel enlisted the talents of Mary Woronov, calling her from New York to star as one of the race victims. The former Warhol actress ("She was in *Chelsea Girls*, of course, in the Dark Ages") came out to Hollywood, and stayed.

Woronov made other pictures under the Corman umbrella, starring with Paul again in *Rock and Roll High School* as the wicked principal Miss Togar. Her friendship with Bartel and her statuesque proportions made her perfect for the part of Mary in *Eating Raoul*, the majestically towering nurse with a rigid sense of

propriety and a nose upturned at any hint of physical contact.

Mary (the part, not the actress) sleeps only with her stuffed doll, just as her husband Paul sleeps with a large bottle-shaped pillow labeled Lafitte-Rothschild 1961.

Why use Paul and Mary's real names in the script? "We are not in life anything like the Blands," Paul explains. "The reason I made the picture was that I wanted to work with Mary again, to see if we couldn't do something subtler and more sustained and complicated."

Eating Raoul begins with a gaudy pseudo-documentary montage of Los Angeles, resembling the newsreel style Paul originally worked with when he left the Army in the late Fifties. As the camera records a sign that reads *Piece O' Pizza — HAD A PIECE LATELY?* a voice-over laments that, in Los Angeles today, the distinction between food and sex has become blurred.

Despite a subsequent record of successful films, Bartel's difficulties in financing *Eating Raoul* are nearly legendary. He broke every rule, from the necessity of filming in segments he could afford — ten minutes here and ten there — to eventually putting up the money of his friends and family to get the picture finished, at a cost under \$1,000,000.

Eating Raoul bears some re-



Writer Richard Blackburn (left), director/actor Bartel (center) and the statuesque Ms. Woronov (right).

Blackburn, Hamilton Camp, ex-DJ the Real Don Steele, Buck Henry, and others) are a tight bunch of Hollywood peripherals. Blackburn, a sometime *Amperand* contributor, spends much of his professional time in London, where he is in demand for rewrites, radio serials and wiggly original screenplays like the soon-to-be-shot *Slayground*. They all work and entertain together with a borderline incestuousness that Paul and Mary Bland's isolation would never allow. Bartel prizes working with his friends as the most important element (a unique one for most of Hollywood) in filmmaking. Twentieth-Century Fox, which eagerly agreed to distribute the independently made feature after it scored well at several film festivals, is betting on the rapport of these mavericks to gradually snowball *Eating Raoul* into a word-of-mouth hit.

Mary Woronov and Bartel are currently preparing to co-star in *Shake It Up*, a film about the Fillmore East rock showroom in the Sixties, directed by Alan Arkush, another in the clan of friends.

"I'll play a surgeon and Mary will play a lighting designer. I enjoy rock and roll, although it's not my favorite music. I enjoyed singing and dancing in Alan Arkush's *Rock and Roll High School*. Both Mary and I were also in Alan's *Heartbeeps*, a film destroyed by various studio executives who had just screened James Bond or *Superman* or something and made it very, very different from Alan's version. Somewhere, a cut does exist on his picture, which was scored with Mozart," Paul continues. "Maybe it will be shown someday."

As a member of the selection committee at Filmex, Bartel shows concern in getting film of all kinds seen. "Filmex is one of my great pleasures in life, permitting me to see a lot of films that never get theatrically released. It gives me the feeling that I can be instrumental in bringing films to the public that might not ordinarily get seen."

Regarding the culture of Los Angeles, Bartel admits he would like to spend more time in New York. "I like both coasts, but I hope I am able to film in New York some day."

In the meantime, he's contenting himself knowing that *Eating Raoul* has been invited to be screened in the New York Film Festival this fall, and he can take in some theater while he's there.

"I'm still singing the songs from Steven Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along*, the most interesting thing I've seen recently," stated the man who merrily leaves low-budget bodies in his cinematic tracks for the enjoyment of people who never remember his name.

His next film? "The title is *Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills*."

Maybe it's a sequel.

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October, 1982 Ampersand 19



Eddie Murphy Breaks Into The Bigger Time

BY BILL BRAUNSTEIN

America's fastest rising young comedian is just a few minutes away from having the living bejeezus kicked out of him. Quietly tucked away in a claustrophobic dressing room on a downtown Los Angeles parking lot taken over by the crew of Paramount Pictures' *48 HRS.* is funnyman Eddie Murphy. Murphy, whose only previous screen appearances are of the television variety as the only certifiable star of the third incarnation of *Saturday Night Live*, will soon be engaged in cinematic fisticuffs.

The scene is to be filmed in a sleazy alleyway bedecked with glitzy neon to make it resemble a San Francisco street. "We got right up to the start of the fight last night," says a subdued Murphy, dressed in his character's Armani glen plaid suit, waiting for darkness to fall. "Got right up to the point where I throw the first punch. But by then the sun was coming up."

Murphy leans back on the narrow couch and smiles. Behind him, hanging in a tiny closet is a pair of worn denim jeans and a denim overcoat that he would undoubtedly feel more comfortable in. After all, Eddie Murphy is 21 years old. The three months he's been working on the movie represent the longest period of time he's ever been away from home.

Yet, here is Eddie Murphy, starring in a big budget motion picture, opposite a major star, Nick Nolte, being directed by Hollywood veteran Walter Hill. Talk about being on a roll. His first comedy album, *Eddie Murphy*, had been released earlier in the week. He was scheduled to do Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show*, the next day (his third appearance on the late night kingpin's show). He had bought a black Mercedes, his fourth car, the previous week. And this September he started his third season on the show that began it all for him, a show he also helped to revive, *Saturday Night Live*.

After a year as a second string "feature" player during SNL's ill-fated 1980-81 season, Murphy helped take the show to new heights with brilliant and crazily original characterizations when he was finally allowed to turn it all loose last season. Armed with a brash cockiness and a veritable laundry list of impersonations and odd characters, he began his comedy march off the beaten laugh track with parodies of Buckwheat, of Little Rascal fame, Velvet Jones, a jive talking huckster, Mr. Robinson, the ghetto's answer to the clean-as-white-bread Mr. Rogers, and film critic Raheem Abdul Muhammad, who defiantly asks why *Shaft* was never nominated for an Oscar.

Murphy's impersonations are equally on target, with the barbs leaving no figure untouched. Some people even say that his humor has a mean streak, that he can be mercilessly cruel. Take, for instance, a sketch he did last season portraying Muhammad Ali as a punch-drunk, disoriented old man. There was his soulful James Brown, dressed in curly red wig, singing *Amie's* "The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow." His Little Richard Simmons is two parodies for the price of one. And then there was the infamous Larry the Lobster sketch, where a tuxedo-dressed Murphy invited viewers to vote whether he should kill the crustacean on live TV. (To his dismay, the lobster was allowed to live.)

"I don't do easy comedy," says Murphy. "I'll do anything that is not taboo to mess with. Like, I won't do jokes on religion or the shooting of the pope or Martin Luther King's death. That kind of thing. But people watch *Saturday Night Live* to see outrageous things. They want to see shocking stuff that they didn't know you could do on television. And that's the stuff they remember."

For the past three months, however, Murphy has had to be content to play only one character, that of Reggie Hammond, a convict sprung from jail for 48 hours to help a cop played by Nick Nolte find some convicts that have murdered a wave of policemen. During the scene that will be shot tonight, Murphy and Nolte, after spending the day together, are fed up with each other. Nolte decides to let Murphy know he means business by trying to wipe the street with him.

A knock on the dressing room door signals he's needed on the set. He walks out of the dressing room and down the seedy street, where hustlers, hookers and transvestites have come to watch the excitement. Off-duty policemen have been hired to patrol the area and an occasional backfire from

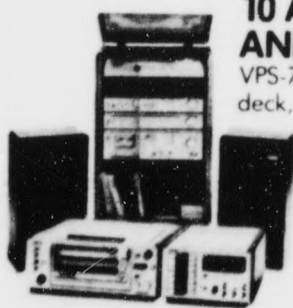
(Continued on page 23)

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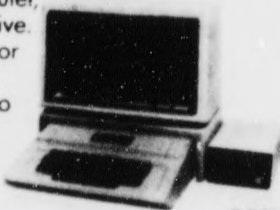


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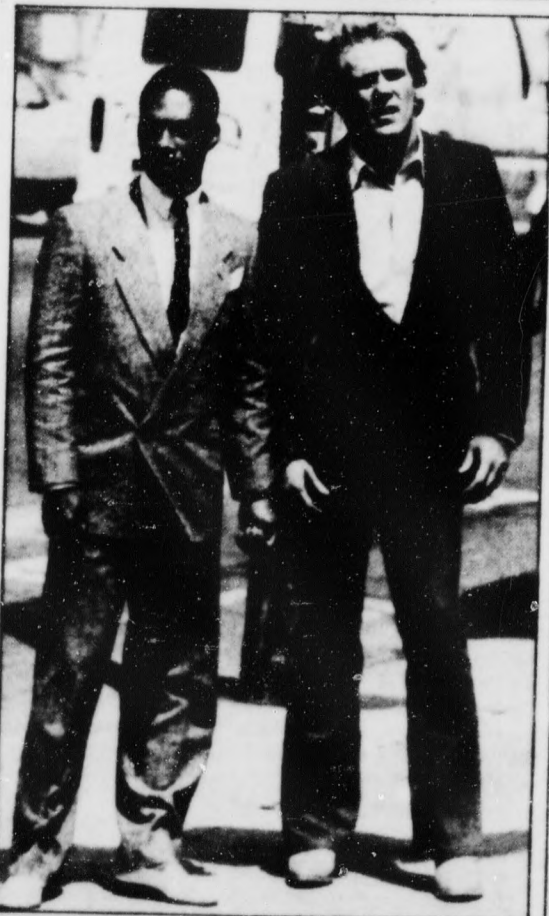
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Eddie Murphy

In 48 Hrs., Murphy plays convict Reggie Hammond who reluctantly assists tough cop Nick Nolte in finding some cop killers. That's director Walter Hill in the beard.



a car causes crew members to smile nervously.

Murphy, standing next to Walter Hill, watches as the two stunt doubles of him and Nolte run through the scene. He nods approvingly as his look-alike launches two quick jabs into the Nolte double's face. But this is not a fight that Hammond is destined to win. After having a garbage can bounced off his ribs, the Murphy look-alike is hoisted high overhead, and given a full body slam into a pile of garbage.

After the stuntmen finish, Murphy will take the place of the double to enable Hill to get close up shots of Murphy in the scene. Hill turns to Murphy, "So, what do you think of your first fight scene?"

Murphy shrugs. He's a little apprehensive about going before the cameras to take a pummeling, so he tries to joke. "It's okay, but do I have to be thrown in the garbage?" It's a rhetorical question. Murphy walks across the street, ready to film the scene, as the crew members gather to watch Murphy in action. During his work on the film, he has earned their respect as a professional, and particularly from the film's director Walter Hill.

Hill, of course, had every reason to worry about working with someone who had never done a film before. But he had seen Murphy on television and sensed his potential. "On *Saturday Night Live*, Eddie was clearly a comedic performer, but one who lent himself to doing acting," Hill says. "I didn't want to hire a comedian, I wanted an actor. But at the same time, I wanted someone who would be spontaneous and bring something comedic to the part."

Hill thinks his gamble paid off. And he believes that Murphy's doing a dramatic role for his first movie will pay off for Murphy, as well. "To me," says Hill, "it's an indication of his intelligence not to run off and do *Meatballs 3* for his debut film. It's good to take on a different kind of problem and be perceived in a different kind of context."

It's a strategy that obviously didn't escape Murphy, either. He had been offered many films, but decided to sit back, take his time and analyze all the offers without rushing to any one picture. "Rather than do a comedy, which was what everyone was expecting," says Murphy, "I thought I'd do a serious movie. I doubt if I'll ever do anything that has this much seriousness again. This is a great experience, but my heart is in the yuks."

Murphy, like many a young comic before him, refined his skills at that great comic breeding ground of American society known as high school. His childhood was not without the little traumas that are a part of growing up. Murphy's parents were divorced when he was three and his father, Charles, a New York policeman, died when Murphy was 12. After Eddie's mother Lillian remarried, his step-father Vernon Lynch moved the family from Brooklyn to Roosevelt, Long Island, a predominantly black middleclass suburb, where Murphy grew up with his two brothers. It was Roosevelt High School where Murphy came into his own.

Aside from the run-of-the-mill practical jokes, such as calling in bomb scares, spraying mace in the hallways, or giving wedgies (ripping out someone's underwear from the rear) to unsuspecting classmates, Murphy mastered the art of the devastating New York putdown, known as ranking. "I was able to rank on people real good," says Murphy. "And whenever there was a talent show, I was always selected to be the emcee."

"See, the kids at Roosevelt had this real short attention span. If you weren't any good in the first two or three seconds of your act, they heckled you. They needed someone who could keep control, so I'd rank them. Like, 'Hey, your mother's got a wooden leg with a kick stand.' That would shut them up. Eventually I started doing impressions and stuff, but my act was basically all putdowns."

At 16 Murphy started doing talent shows, wangled his way onto some cable TV shows and was even finding steady work at one Long Island comedy club. Armed with self confidence and the rudimentary beginnings of an act, Murphy was on his way. "By this time, I was performing three, four times a week. And my report card was showing it." But still, Murphy was pocketing more money than he ever had and this enticed him further.

The Gong Show was in its heyday at this time and many comedy clubs would advertise Gong Show Nights, an anything-goes assortment of potluck comedians who vied for a \$50 cash prize. "Whenever I needed money, I would scan the papers for a bar holding a Gong Show Night. It was easy money, no problem."

"Eating Boogers—that was my killing routine. Then, Butterflies Landing on S-t. Classy stuff. And Farts. Farts was a killer. You could always count on Farts. I'd be driving to a club, figuring out my set. I'd think, I'll do Eating Boogers, Butterflies and Farts—Killer set."

He was travelling more and more and when he was finally graduated from high school, Murphy attended Nassau Community College for all of two weeks. But Eddie knew that his future wasn't to be found in the hallways of a book palace. "If you want to be a performer," he says, "and you are going to school, I think you're wasting your time."

"I wasn't concerned about his future," says Eddie's mother Lillian. "Although he wasn't keeping his grades up, I knew he would end up doing something where he wouldn't have to get his hands dirty." Murphy found himself in his comedy. By the time he was 18, Murphy was touring the country, playing nightclubs. "I had gone

past Eating Boogers, and had a classy little act," says Murphy.

The comedian was performing at a Ft. Lauderdale night club during the summer of 1980 when Bob Wachs, Murphy's manager, summoned him to New York and sent him to audition for what was to be a new and improved version of *Saturday Night Live*. The entire cast had left, and NBC was starting over, from scratch. "I submitted Eddie," says Bob Wachs, "and through a series of very gruesome, long hard interviews and auditions, Eddie got the part."

It took six auditions during a one month period before Murphy received the word that he had been hired. Murphy remembers well the resistance he had initially before trying out for the show. "I really didn't want to be on *Saturday Night Live*. I wanted to be a stand up comic. I mean, I was 19, travelling all over the place, making like \$500 a week, while my friends were all working in department stores. My life was perfect."

That life changed when he became a feature player, a sort of second stringer who did bit parts in sketches, during the 1980-81 season. But what was thought to be a blessing almost turned out to be the kiss of death during that disastrous season, which almost saw the show destroyed.

After Lorne Michaels, the show's original producer, left along with the rest of the charter member irregulars, NBC, with much hoopla, promoted Jean Doumanian, the associate producer, to the top spot. Doumanian took control and hired a new cast, new staff, new writers and gave the show a new look, namely failure. Once the crown jewel of late night comedy, the Doumanian reign was like a string of paste pearls. *Saturday Night Live* earned universally negative reviews and the ratings began to take a nose dive.

For the 1981-82 season, Doumanian was ingloriously put out to pasture, as were all but two of the original cast. The survivors were Eddie Murphy and Joe Piscopo. With Dick Ebersol, the NBC program executive who was in charge of the show's original launch in 1975, appointed to the helm, SNL made slow, but steady improvements last season. One reason was the spotlighting of the talents of Murphy, who was allowed to cast off his feature status. He became a full fledged cast member and given almost total freedom. He now writes his own material, is allowed to regularly introduce off-beat characters, and is pulling in a reported \$4,500 a show.

Murphy was upset at being held back his initial year with the show. "They said I was too young and I wouldn't know how to handle success. That was Jean. She told me, 'We don't want another Freddie Prinze on our hands.'" Yet Murphy refuses to lay blame with Doumanian for the show's eventual collapse.

"Jean meant well. She just had no comedic background. You have to blame the network. I mean, if I was driving down the street with Stevie Wonder and said, 'Stevie, you drive,' you can't blame Stevie if we crash. You have to blame me."

As for Murphy's long term goals, don't look for any crashes in his future, although the Freddie Prinze syndrome is something that he thinks about, even jokes about. "In the true tradition of young celebrity, I think I'll die in a plane crash."

"No, look, I'm not dying no time soon. I want to be the first guy to ever be successful at an early age and not croak and not kill himself. That's my plan. Stay successful and not die. I'm 21 years old, I don't see myself puttering out. Or I hope not, anyway."

Looking to the future, Murphy hopes to do a feature film that he is writing called *I'm Gonna Get You, Sucker*, a sendup of black exploitation films. He should have plenty of time to finish writing it. Murphy plans to leave *Saturday Night Live* at the end of its current season and take a much deserved rest. After all, last season's edition ended on May 22. Two days later Murphy was in San Francisco filming *48 HRS.*' exterior street scenes with Nick Nolte. He's been working ever since.

Now, on a Los Angeles street corner taken over by movie people, Murphy is about to fight. Director Walter Hill gives the orders. "Places. Roll 'em."

All goes well, with Murphy ducking and rolling with the punches. The crowd grows larger as the scene unfolds. The climactic moment has arrived. The stuntman places one hand between Murphy's legs and the other on his back, lifting him high into the air to slam him into the pile of trash.

The director yells, "Cut." As Murphy is hoisted overhead, there's a smile on his face as wide as a tunnel. "Let's try it again," says Hill. Murphy runs through his paces a second time, on the receiving end of the fast and furious blows. He is picked up and without a hitch is slammed down hard into the pile of garbage. Hill looks pleased. "That's a keeper," he says.

The crowd, which has grown to nearly concert size, breaks into a round of spontaneous applause, while Murphy, in the pile of trash, looks around, puzzled, then gets up slowly, slightly disoriented. Bouyed by the mixture of attention and relief that the scene is completed, Murphy pulls himself together and starts walking methodically to the stunt double, his mood growing more lively with each step.

Finally, Murphy is standing face to face with the massive stuntman. He looks him in the eye. "I kicked your butt, sucker," says Murphy.

They both break out laughing, and Eddie Murphy walks to the street corner and readies himself for the next scene.

MARSHALL CRENSHAW'S GREATEST HITS

(A Singular Vision)



BY ERIC FLAUM

Talk with Marshall Crenshaw, whose debut LP *Marshall Crenshaw* and single, "Someday, Someway," are both ascending the charts, and before long you'll be talking about favorite records. "What if," I say, posing the classic question, "you were stuck on a desert island? What

album would you want?"

Crenshaw peers through his tinted glasses and adjusts the large white cowboy hat that surmounts his close-cropped brown hair. His grin

is as instantly ready as his answer. I'd rather have ten singles. Maybe *My Generation* by The Who, *C'mon Everybody* by Eddie Cochran, *Trapped by a Thing Called Love* by Deniece LaSalle, *Let's Stay Together* by Al Green... I could name fifty or five hundred of them.

"I really like singles," Crenshaw expands, shifting in his soft chair at Warner Bros. Records' New York headquarters, where he's spending a brief break during a criss-crossing tour of America. "Singles are what I'm really about. I consider each little song an entity unto itself and an album just a collection of ideas. The format I'm really excited about is EPs and 12-inch singles."

Marshall Crenshaw is a product of Detroit's middle-class suburbs, where he was exposed to a plethora of musical styles. The Detroit upbringing left him with "... a general mania for pop music," Crenshaw says. "I don't care how old or new something is. My tastes are diverse." Just

how diverse becomes clear as he lets loose a stream of favorites and influences that spans Bootsy Collins, Lefty Frizzell, Iggy and the Stooges, the Ramones, the Who and, as the TV ads for compilation albums say, much, much more.

Clearly, however, Crenshaw's music is mostly reminiscent of two of pop music's greatest influences: Buddy Holly and the Beatles. With brother Robert on drums, and bassist Chris Donato, Crenshaw makes full use of the trio's harmony singing and background vocals that recall "The Chirping Crickets," Holly's back-up

singers, or the harmonies on *Meet the Beatles*.

Yet no one can accuse this music of being a mere revivalist flash. Crenshaw's sound is not plagiarism but progression, an individual style built on some of the strongest bricks from the base of pop music. "I'm proud of the comparisons," Marshall says in reference to the constantly recurring mentions of these artists, later calling his influences "our cultural heritage." But while many critics have described his music as coming from the Fifties, it is absurd to think of Crenshaw as anything but a product of the Eighties.

Marshall began the Seventies in Detroit, playing guitar for four years in a local bar band. A series of differences with band members, as well as Crenshaw's knowledge that "if you're in a hurry (to get established) and still in Detroit, there's something wrong with your mind," was the incentive behind an unsuccessful 1975 trip to Los Angeles in search of fame and fortune. Crenshaw landed a dismal job with a touring Country & Western band 71-75 before returning home penniless. On a lark, with brother Robert's help, he answered an ad for Beatlemania try-outs with a recording of "I Should Have Known Better." For the next two years, 1976 to 1978, Marshall Crenshaw was John Lennon, travelling the country in the role of his one-time hero.

The pay was good, but Crenshaw felt stifled and left the cast in 1978. He married his high school sweetheart and moved to New York, a city he has adopted with fervor. "This is my town," he says about the Big Apple, before grinning and reminding himself of his Michigan upbringing. But anyone who listens to "Rockin' Around in N.Y.C." on the album's first side, with its joyous Ramones-like brevity, knows where Marshall's heart belongs.

During the end of his tenure with Beatlemania, Crenshaw began compiling an impressive collection of songs. He recorded a number of these on a four-track tape deck, and passed the demo about to most anyone who would listen. One person who took notice was producer Richard Gottehrer, looking for material for the next Robert Gordon album. Crenshaw gave Gordon three songs, and co-wrote another with him, but when Gottehrer split with Gordon, eventually producing the Go-Go's *Beauty and the Beat*, Gordon's album was put on hold. Eventually *Are You Gonna Be the One* was released, and it contained "Someday, Someway," a small hit that revived Gordon's sagging career, and marked just the beginning for the song's composer Marshall Crenshaw. Lou Ann Barton featured Crenshaw's

"Brand New Lover" on her debut album, and slowly the word began to spread.

Warner Bros. got hold of the word, and sent Marshall into the studio. In New York, Crenshaw had begun to build a reputation throughout the club scene, mixing handfuls of lesser-known gems of the past with originals of equal merit, and had already released a 12-inch single on Shake Records. The band entered the Record Plant Studios in hope of capturing the sound that had taken them this far, but soon found themselves bogged down. "The freshness was gone," Marshall recalls, "and there was no way for me to detach myself to look at it." Re-enter Richard Gottehrer, the objective eye that helped the trio complete twelve tracks in six weeks.

It is difficult to describe the energetic simplicity and exuberant beauty that permeates Crenshaw's debut album. Each song stands as an affirmation of rock and roll's ability to thrill the listener. "She Can't Dance" celebrates the pop music fan, "Mary Anne" is a tribute to a female of the Eighties much as "Peggy Sue" remains the ideal of the Fifties. "Cynical Girl" is arguably the album's peak, a jingle-jangle tune that seems to sum up our times, with the song's hero "going out looking for a cynical girl, who's got no use for the real world." Like the Eighties, "Cynical Girl" is a little funny and a little skeptical.

If there's a problem with Crenshaw's debut album it's that it fails to capture all of the energy that comes through in his live shows. Marshall is aware of this, saying that "it's something we're going to try to get next time. As time goes on that's what we're going to be trying to accomplish." Is it that the raw sound in concert packs more power than the refined studio renditions? "There's going to be a lot less over-tracking and less dubbing," Marshall says, hoping that the follow-up album, already in the mental planning stages, will be truer to the full-sounding versions that concert goers have heard. But Crenshaw realizes that there's more to creating memorable music than finding the right mix in the studio. In great recording of the past, Marshall finds "some personality or human spirit that comes across in those records," and hopes that he too can communicate such vitality.

Particularly, Crenshaw loves the immediacy of impact of a good single. "I have only about a five-second attention span," he confesses. "That's why all the exaggerated aspects of a single appeal to me. And, if an artist is lucky, maybe there's something of lasting value there, too. The good stuff tends to stay around."

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OUTTHEOTHER

(continued from page 6)

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REMEMBER SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE'S spoof of bad movies with Dan Aykroyd playing Leonard Pith Gar-nell, a man who relished introducing bad cinema? By the end of this year you can go to your local movie house and pay to see *It Came from Hollywood*, a compilation of film clips from some of the worst "old, bad movies" ever. Just for some marquee value, Paramount has tabbed Richard Pryor, Gilda Radner and Cheech and Chong as narrators.

Where Are the Brains?

STEVE MARTIN has just completed filming *The Man with Two Brains*, a comedy that takes him away from the "heady" work he did on *Pennies from Heaven* and *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid* and puts him back into the "wild and crazy humor" of his first film, *The Jerk*.

This time Martin plays a world-

famous brain surgeon who has just developed the "cranial screwtop" method of surgery. While being interviewed by an intrepid reporter he spies beautiful Kathleen Turner (*Body Heat*), who is conveniently hit by his car so Steve can perform the operation that will save her life. Naturally, he falls in love, marries her and the two speed off to Vienna to combine their honeymoon with his lecture at the Institute of Craniology.

Unfortunately, Turner proves to be a tacky tart and Steve takes refuge with a brain floating all alone in a lab tank (it's true). The dilemma—does he find a body for his new true love or just join her in cerebral bliss? The world will find out next summer when Warner Bros. releases the picture.

Who Stole My Last Three Pages?

WITH EVERY STUDIO IN HOLLYWOOD hot on the sequel bandwagon (e.g., *Rocky III*, *Star Trek II*, *Grease 2*, ...), it was not exactly a revelation when Universal Pictures announced a follow up to the classic Hitchcock

thriller *Psycho*. What was surprising to Universal MCA president Sid Sheinberg was the ending (or lack of one) to his copy of the script.

It seems that the prez was thoroughly engrossed in the misadventures of nasty Norman Bates, who in this version is undergoing a sanity hearing 22 years after his grisly murder spree and is declared mentally competent and put on the streets to presumably wreak havoc again. Well, just as Sheinberg was getting to the end—there was no ending. The last three pages of his script were missing. He called the producer to complain, but was told, "You're right, no one gets to read the last three pages."

Though not the usual way in the movie biz, Sheinberg saw the light. The picture still went on to film around L.A. with Tony Perkins and Vera Miles reprising their roles. The ending? You can bet it leaves the door open for *Psycho III*.

Working

AFTER SPENDING MOST OF LAST YEAR on his Santa Barbara ranch and flying himself to see friends in Europe, John Travolta is going back to work again. He hopes to start filming in the spring on *Staying Alive*,



The Bus Boys in 48 Hrs. (left to right): Kevin O'Neal, Gus Lounderman, Brian O'Neal, Victor Johnson and Mike Jones. Drummer Steve Felix is hidden in the background.

Substitutions:

DIRECTOR WALTER HILL first wanted L.A. rockabilly favorites The Blasters to supply music for his currently filming *48 Hrs.* pic, starring Nick Nolte and Eddie Murphy. But the finicky, leather-clad lads were worried about what said appearance might do to their "image." (How much "image" can someone from Downey, CA have?) Anyway, after weeks of fretting they nixed the offer, much to the pleasure of the Bus Boys—an eager, ambitious, rockin' assemblage of black and chicano musicians (okay, just one chicano). The Bus Boys were in line for fame a couple of seasons ago, with an *Ampersand* cover, a *Rolling Stone* feature and a last-minute-cancelled *Time* feature, plus a budding friendship with Messrs. Jagger and Richards. According to on-the-set observers, they've jumped on this new opportunity with all twelve feet.

billed as a kind of sequel to *Saturday Night Fever* in which we pick up super cool Tony Manero five years later as a would-be actor-chorus kid in N.Y. *Fever* costar Karen Lynn Gorney is again expected to play opposite him.

Actually, Travolta had wanted to do the biopic of the late Jim Morrison, but both the Doors and Paramount (to whom Travolta owed his next picture) resisted. Nevertheless, he still plans to make *Fire*, a script written by Brian DePalma, that is to Morrison what *The Rose* was to Janis Joplin. Also on tap is a romance, *About a Week*, that will reunite him with *Grease* costar Olivia Newton-John and director Randall Kleiser. He'll portray a deejay on a whirlwind romance with ONJ.

Mixing Music & Movies

DUDLEY MOORE AND ROBERT DUVAL have both turned to music in their upcoming pictures. Moore composed the score for his new Christmas film, *Six Weeks*, in which he stars as a politician opposite Mary Tyler Moore, a cosmetics mogul whose daughter is dying. *Tender Mercies* features Duval as a raspy country warbler trying to make a comeback from alcoholism. He wrote one of the four tunes he sings in the picture, which is directed by Austria's Bruce Beresford.

AFTER MORE THAN A YEAR AS a Broadway and (soon-to-be) film star in *Pirates of Penzance*, Linda Ronstadt has recorded an album of mostly new material. She is also contemplating an album of standards arranged by one of Frank Sinatra's favorite conductors, Nelson Riddle (who scored one song on the aforementioned album). Elektra/Asylum says it will release the new disc by the end of this year. As for the standards, says one insider, "it depends if the first one stiffs."

GARY U.S. BONDS, whose career was rejuvenated with, among other things, the hit single "Out of Work," is segueing into movie work. He sings the original title song on *Na-*

tional Lampoon's Class Reunion, a spoof of horror films that is just one of four projects in the works at various studios. *Animal House 2* is in development (?) at Universal. *Vacation*, starring Chevy Chase, is filming at WB, and Paramount's Lampoon treatment of *Joy of Sex* is slated to get underway this year with the possibility of *Laverne and Shirley's* Penny Marshall (uh, huh) making her directing debut.

Computers Still Live

ALTHOUGH DISNEY STUDIOS failed to produce a blockbuster with its computer epic, *Tron*, United Artists is going ahead with plans for *War Games*, a thriller centering on a boy computer genius who taps into a national defense program. Unlike the Disney effort, it will be more of a drama "where no one can tell what is real and what is being acted." Mathew Broderick, who appears in Neil Simon's upcoming *Max Dugan Returns*, stars with Martin Brest (*Going in Style*) directing.

On Location

OSCAR WINNER TIMOTHY HUTTON can be seen tootling around the streets of N.Y. these days sporting a new grungy beard and squiring Amanda Plummer, his costar in director Sidney Lumet's upcoming film version of E.L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*. Hutton grew the whiskers to show that he could look like something other than the all-American boy for his role in the fictionalized account of a Jewish family caught in the House Committee on Un-American Activities hearings of the late Sen. Joe McCarthy. No such sacrifice was needed by Plummer, daughter of Christopher Plummer and Tammy Grimes and recent Tony Award winner for *Agnes of God*.

Steve Ginsberg attended Queen's College in New York and Northwestern near Chicago before migrating to Los Angeles three years ago. He now toils for Variety and claims "show business is my life."

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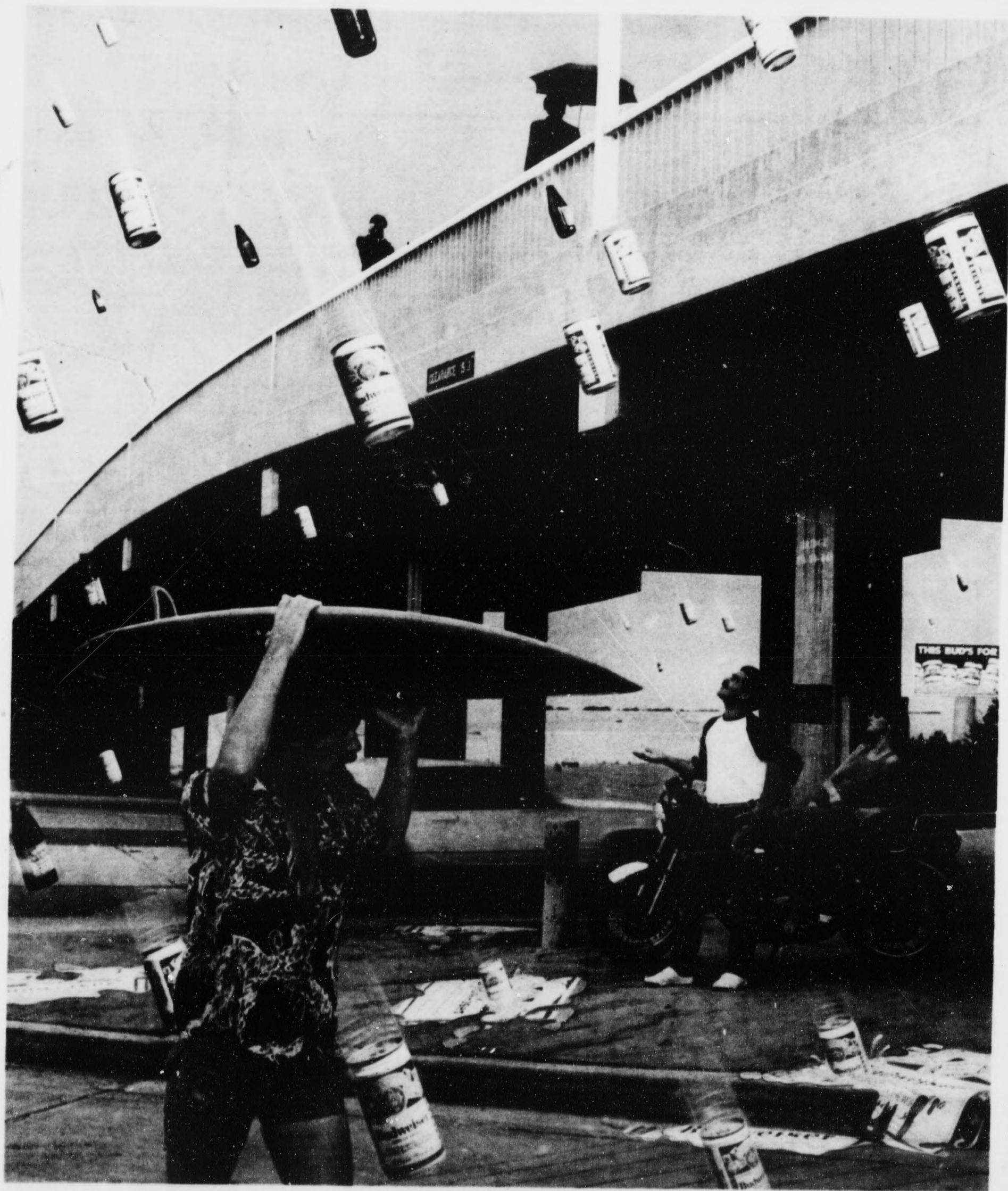
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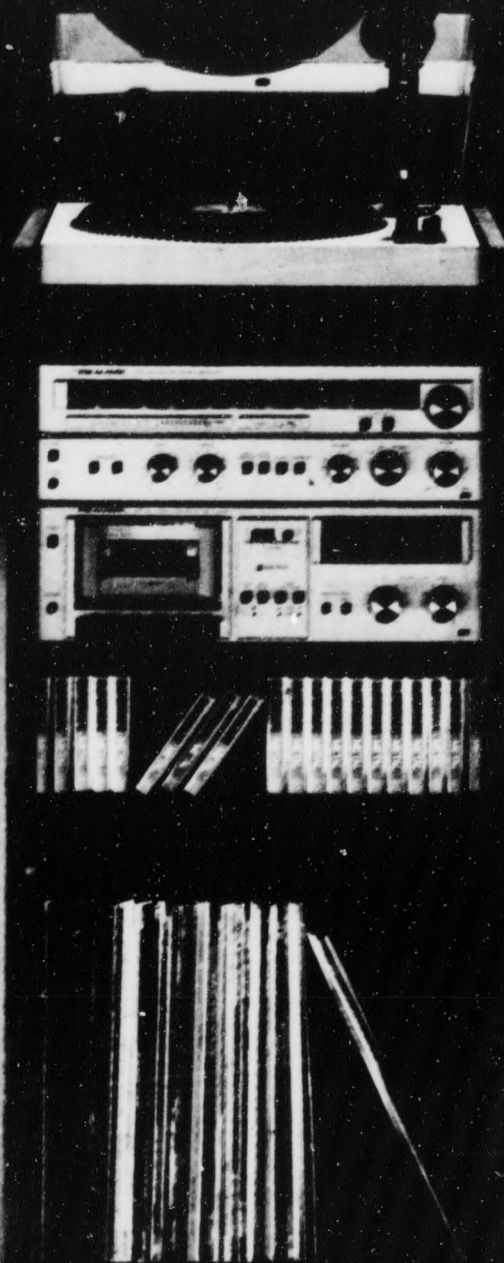
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